A PROPOSED INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM FOR
THE PRIMARY GRADES OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
IN JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLORADO

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Teaching the child to read is one of the major responsibilities of our schools. "Today's teachers assume that they must guide children in such a way that 'little black marks' laid out neatly, line after line on pages become meaningful signs, signals and symbols."[1]

There is an awareness that the traditional ways of teaching are not always best. Many people today question the effectiveness of our elementary reading programs. It is the responsibility of educators to continuously search for new and improved ways of teaching reading. As knowledge about the learning process, about child growth and development, evaluation, and the art of reading has increased, the methods, techniques, and materials of reading have changed. New ways of teaching reading must be experimented with and if they are successful they should be introduced into the classroom.

Large numbers of professional books, national committee reports, curriculum guides and magazine articles are regularly concerned with the teaching of reading. In addition more than four thousand individual research studies on reading have been conducted during the last century.[2] Although

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[1]Jeanette Veatch, _Individualizing Your Reading_ (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959), p. vii.

[2]William S. Gray, "Research in Reading Marches On," _The Reading Teacher_, XII (December, 1958), p. 74.

the research studies have greatly increased the fund of
knowledge regarding the total reading process, numerous un-
solved problems still remain. Gates states:

> ...we are far more conscious today than formerly
> of the complexity of reading problems and are far
> less certain of the answers to many of them. The
> fact is also recognized that research in reading
> must continue on a broad scale if reading is to
> serve ultimately its broadest function as an aid
> to personal development, scholastic progress, and
> social betterment.[3]

Every elementary teacher faces the problem of meeting
the individual needs of the child in reading instruction.
It is especially of prime concern for the primary teacher
whose job it is to introduce the process and to teach the
initial stages of reading.

The importance of beginning reading has been pointed
out by Hildreth. She stated:

> This is the most critical period in the child's
> school career because his subsequent progress depends
> so largely on the skills learned and the habits
> formed during the first three or four years. If
> reading gets off to a good start in Grades 1 and 2,
> the child's future growth in literacy is fairly well
> assured.[4]

The problem faced by primary teachers is that of pro-
viding reading instruction which takes into account indivi-
dual differences in learning rate. The question asked by
primary teachers is: What type of reading instruction will

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[3]William S. Gray, "Reading," Encyclopedia of
Educational Research, Chester W. Harris, editor (Third
edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 1087.

[4]Gertrude Hildreth, Teaching Reading (New York:
Henry Holt and Company, 1958), p. 187.

foster the maximum development of each child?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purposes of this study were: (1) to review the
present practice of reading instruction; (2) to survey
current findings in the use of individualized reading; (3) to
survey literature of procedures to be used in individualized
reading; and (4) to propose specific guidelines to be used
in an individualized reading program.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The primary reading program in the Jefferson County
Schools is taught by the basal reader group approach. Each
class is sub-grouped into three or four groups for the pur-
pose of reading instruction. The slow, average, high and
gifted groups are all taught by the same method and with the
same basal reader. This approach has not taken into account
the wide range of individual differences that are found
within the classroom.

The high ability and gifted groups are not challenged
to the full extent of their ability. The slowest are pushed
beyond their abilities in order to cover the graded readers.

Graded basic reading texts are used in each classroom.
These books have been graded to the average child. Upon com-
pletion of the basic readers the high ability and gifted
groups are given supplementary readers for enrichment pur-
poses; however, these supplementary texts are of the same

graded level which gives little more than the same type of instruction as the previous basic readers. It is difficult for the teacher to create opportunities for the slow learner to achieve a measure of personal success. Pressures are placed upon the child to get him through the basic reading text in order for him to be reading on grade level.

Both materials and instruction are not differentiated to keep pace with the different growth patterns of the children. Effort needs to be made to improve the instructional approaches which respect individual differences.

Educators throughout the country express concern that the present day reading programs do not allow the child maximum growth. Harris stated:

> Although all teachers know that there are important differences in reading ability among children, few are aware of how great these differences really are. A look at the magnitude of the problem will show vividly why it is essential that continuing efforts be made to improve our methods of adapting to individual abilities.[5]

A number of plans for individualized reading have been suggested for adjusting instruction in the teaching of reading to the wide range of individual differences and needs found in the classroom.

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[5]Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (Third edition; New York: Longmans, Green and Company, Inc., 1960), p. 99.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Basal Reading Program. A basal reading program is an approach to the teaching of reading aimed at the systematic development of reading ability through use of one or more basal readers or co-basal readers and its accompanying materials. The children are sub-grouped within the classroom for instruction on the basis of reading ability.

Basal Reader. A basal reader is a textbook which is part of a graded series designed to provide systematic instruction in reading.

Supplementary Reader. A supplementary reader is a reading book designed to be used for reading instruction but only to supplement basic instruction and to give additional reading and practice. The teacher's guide of a supplementary reader is not as elaborate as that of a basal reader.

Trade Book. This term refers to a book designed for the general bookstore and library market rather than text use.

Pre-Primer. Pre-primers are the first books to present words in a graded series of readers. The books are paper-covered and have a small vocabulary and usually have single lined sentences. Graded reading series usually provide three pre-primers each increasing in difficulty.

Primer. The primer is the first hard-covered book in a graded series to follow the pre-primers. A primer repeats the vocabulary used in the pre-primers and gradually introduces new words. There is usually only one primer in a

graded reading series.

Reading Readiness. This term applies to that stage of growth, when reached, which allows a child to learn to read without excess difficulty. The reading activities include those which prepare the child for reading, that is, reading pictures, telling stories, training eye movement, visual discrimination and auditory discrimination.

Initial Stage in Learning to Read. This term implies the beginning stage of learning to read which is found in the first grade. This period builds a sight vocabulary and initial consonant sounds are taught. Much of the reading is oral, but silent reading is introduced and stress is placed on getting meanings rather than just calling words. Experience stories, pre-primers, primers and first readers are the main materials. Fostering a desire and an interest for reading is a major goal.

Rapid Development of Reading Skills. This stage is normally found in the second and third grades. In these grades a thorough grounding in basic skills is provided. Comprehension is emphasized. Training in the techniques of word recognition and word analysis receives much attention. Fostering interest in reading and encouraging children to read widely in varied sources are important aims.

Individualized Reading Program. An individualized reading program is an approach to the teaching of reading

characterized by these features:

1. Many different trade books as well as single copies of supplementary readers and basal readers are used for instruction.

2. Each pupil selects, with teacher guidance, the material which he will read during the time scheduled for reading.

3. Individual pupil-teacher conferences are held to provide instruction and to give guidance in developing reading skills, vocabulary, interests, and attitudes.

4. Grouping is employed only as needed and for a specific purpose; the structure of groups changes as needs and purposes change.

5. It includes the basic elements of self-selection, self-seeking and self-pacing.

Self-Selection. This term implies that the child has the opportunity in his regular school reading time to choose his reading materials according to his interests and drives.

Self-Seeking. The child has the opportunity to explore his reading environment and to seek from it those experiences that are in tune with his maturity. He seeks to find the help he needs to be a more effective reader with the material he can handle.

Self-Pacing. This term implies that the child has the opportunity to read at his own pace the materials he has chosen independently.

Sight-Vocabulary. The words memorized or recognized as a whole, rather than by their parts blended together to form the whole.

Primary Grades. The primary grades are defined as first, second and third grades.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The procedure followed in acquiring data to answer the problems in this study was to survey literature in the field of reading. The literature in the field of reading concerning present day practices was reviewed. The theory of individualized reading as well as review of actual practices was investigated. The selected literature was both published and unpublished.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Objectives of Reading Instruction

Historical Reading Objectives

The religious factor was the directing force in the early colonial schools. The fundamental aim for teaching reading from 1607 to approximately 1776 was to equip pupils to read Bible material.[6] Oral reading was stressed since literate members of families read the Scriptures aloud to relatives and friends.

After the revolt of the Colonies a new period of reading instruction began. During this era, 1776 to 1840, dual

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[6]Rudolph R. Reeder, The Historical Development of School Readers and Method in Teaching Reading (New York: Columbia University, 1900), pp. 9-12.

aims, a nationalistic aim and a moralistic aim were reflected
in the content of the reading books.[7] Although the religious
materials of the colonial period were still used, with a
slightly watered down moralism the reading content emphasized
patriotism. Instruction was focused on eloquent oral read-
ing.[8]

Horace Mann made an important contribution to improved
reading instruction when he condemned the excessive devotion
to oral reading practices in schools of his time. Mann's
criticism in 1838 has become famous.

> Discussing what a meaningless performance reading
> round the class has become--minus thinking and
> feeling--he said that oral reading as conducted was
> 'a barren action of the organs of speech upon the
> atmosphere.' He found that eleven out of twelve of
> all children in the reading classes did not under-
> stand the words they read aloud so glibly.[9]

Horace Mann stimulated educators of his time to object
to a style of reading that sacrificed meaning. A complaint
in 1845 by a Grammar School Committee in Boston reported
that, "Some of the pupils read extremely well; but in too
many instances the reading was affected and theatrical."[10]
At a later date the same committee reported that "the

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[7]Paul Witty, Reading in Modern Education (Boston:
D. C. Heath, 1949), p. 2.

[8]Lillian Gray, Teaching Children to Read (Second
Edition; New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1957), p. 33.

[9]Gray, op. cit., p. 37.

[10]Ibid.

children's chattering...shows only the power of their
memories to retain names of things they do not understand."[11]

The general goals of the period 1840 to 1880 were not
clearly defined, although there was still emphasis upon the
nationalistic and moralistic aims. The specific objectives
of oral reading and elocution continued to be stressed.

A new era evolved about 1890. Many of the readers
which came into use at this time used story material as a
basis for developing habits and skills. Emphasis was on
thought-getting rather than word mastery, but oral reading
still was being stressed.[12]

During the period between the years 1880 and 1920,
the aim of reading was to promote a permanent interest in
literature. Criticism from Europeans, who claimed that the
big growing country across the Atlantic was as crude and un-
couth as some of the frontiersmen along its expanding borders,
stimulated the desire for culture and motivated interest in
reading as a cultural asset.[13]

Silent reading was the primary objective of instruc-
tion from the period of 1880 to 1920. A few proponents of
silent reading advocated complete abandonment of oral reading;
however, most educators advocated both.[14]

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[11]Ibid.

[12]Witty, op. cit., p. 5.

[13]Gray, op. cit., p. 39.

[14]Witty, op. cit., p. 6.

During the period from 1920 to 1925 reading instruction was characterized by the absence of the oral reading objectives. It was at this time that teaching efficient silent reading in order to meet the practical needs of life became the major goal. This tendency to go to the opposite extreme, was brought about by the Army Alpha tests administered to service men in World War I to test their silent reading ability. These tests revealed that overwhelming numbers of Americans had inferior silent reading habits. Oral reading was blamed for the poor results and educators began to emphasize silent reading.[15]

Another era of reading instruction began in 1925. Several objectives for teaching reading were recognized. The major objectives of this period were set forth in the Twenty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1. The first objective was that of providing rich and varied experiences through reading. The second objective emphasized the development of permanent interests in reading. The third objective of the committee dealt with the development of desirable attitudes and effective habits and skills.[16]

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[15]Gray, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

[16]Guy M. Whipple (ed.), Report of the National Committee on Reading, Twenty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1 (Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1925), pp. 9-12.

Present-Day Reading Objectives

Present-day reading objectives have not changed to a
great extent from that of the National Committee on Reading
in 1925. Reading authorities of today describe the goals of
reading instruction in similar terms. Betts advanced these
goals:

1. Reading is only one learning aid and, therefore,
   should be buttressed with the use of other
   means, such as visual and auditory aids, direct
   observation, experimentation, and discussion.

2. Guidance in both silent and oral reading is
   required in a well-balanced instructional
   program.

3. Guidance in reading should promote the use of
   skills, abilities, attitudes, and informa-
   tion for obtaining worth-while recreation and
   valid information.[17]

Four major objectives of the instruction of reading
were given by Gray:

1. To promote a growing understanding and deep
   appreciation of the distinctive role and value
   of reading in an age of mass media.

2. To extend and enrich experiences through read-
   ing and to promote increasing participation
   in the thought-life of the world in harmony
   with the background, learning capacity, and
   level of maturity of the pupils taught.

3. To cultivate interest in personal reading
   that will illuminate, direct, and inspire the
   present and future life of all readers.

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[17]Emmett Albert Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruc-
tion (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 98.

4. To promote continuous progress toward the high level of competence in reading that current life demands.[18]

Paul Witty wrote that the chief aim of the reading program is "...to help pupils become skillful, self-reliant, and independent readers, who will continue to enrich their understandings and satisfactions throughout their lives by reading."[19]

Eight major objectives of the reading program were given by Russell:

1. To make provisions for determining and developing reading readiness at all levels

2. To encourage strong motives for and permanent interest in reading as an activity of value in both work and recreational situations

3. To acquaint children with ideas that will extend and enrich their experiences of life in modern America and an interdependent world

4. To present ideas and develop attitudes associated with good citizenship and worthy character

5. To cultivate tastes and interests in a wide variety of good literature in books, other current publications, songs, recordings, and radio and television programs

6. To provide the gradual increase in skills and acquisition of valuable habits in silent and oral reading

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[18]William S. Gray, "Objectives for the New Reading Program," Evaluation in Reading, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 88 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 12-13.

[19]Paul Witty, "Reading Instruction--A Forward Look," Elementary English, XXXVIII (March, 1961), pp. 156-7.

> 7. To develop abilities associated with the use
> of books and other study activities
>
> 8. To provide a basis for successful reading of
> printed materials in the various subject-
> matter areas of the curriculum, with special
> stress on the contribution of reading to
> other language-arts activities[20]

Reading instruction. Albert Harris briefly summar-
izes the five stages of reading instruction as put forth by
the National Committee on Reading in the Twenty-Fourth
Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education,
Part I. He stated: (1) development of reading readiness;
(2) initial stage in learning to read; (3) rapid development
of reading skills; (4) stage of wide reading; and (5) refine-
ment of reading.[21]

Each reading stage has specific objectives which are
consistent with the broad general objectives of the reading
program. Since this investigation was concerned with the
primary reading program, only specific objectives of the
reading readiness stage, initial stage in learning to read,
and the stage of rapid development of reading skills were
considered.

Development of reading readiness. The reading readi-
ness stage starts from birth and usually continues into the

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[20]David H. Russell, Children Learn to Read (New York:
Ginn and Company, 1961), p. 144.

[21]Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability
(Third edition; New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1960),
pp. 14-16.

early part of first grade. Harris states that it may be
defined as a state of general maturity which when reached,
allows a child to learn to read without excess difficulty.[22]

Reading readiness is not a single trait but a state
of all-around development or maturity; it is best developed
in a class atmosphere which provides conditions for physical,
intellectual, and social development. There should be a
variety of stimulating and informative experiences which
encourage children to look and listen attentively, and to
express their thoughts and feelings in many different forms
of creative and expressive activity. A program that provides
for child development will include both group and individual
activities. Eyes and hands are trained through work with
blocks, clay, crayons, paint, scissors and weaving. Language
growth is stimulated in many ways, including listening to
stories, discussing experiences, conversation, poetry and
dramatizations. New ideas and concepts are introduced through
many kinds of experiences including trips and visits. Learn-
ing to live in a group is a major goal.[23]

Some of the specific goals by Betts were outlined as
follows:

    1. To stimulate a desire for and an interest in
       reading

    2. To broaden interests

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[22]Harris, op. cit., p. 26.

[23]Harris, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

3.   To develop independent work habits

4.   To develop an awareness of pupil responsibility
to the group

5.   To promote social adequacy

6.   To develop courteous responses in social situa-
tions[24]

The initial stage in learning to read. The initial

stage in learning to read is found in the first grade and is

an extension of the reading readiness stage. Reading is

first introduced by labeling the objects in the classroom.

Children's names are printed on cards and the cards are used

to identify their desk and their clothes hanger. Pictures

are displayed with brief titles below each. Bulletin boards

are made with weather reports, special events and messages to

children. Children compose stories based on their experi-

ences and the teacher prints these on a chart. Gradually the

children begin to recognize some common phrases and words.[25]

Systematic instruction is started with a preprimer

that presents a small and simple vocabulary with a great

deal of repetition. Seatwork is used which correlates with

the words in the child's sight vocabulary.

Russell made a specific listing of objectives for the

initial stage in learning to read, which are as follows:

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[24]Emmett Albert Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruc-
tion (New York: American Book Company, 1950), pp. 153-155.

[25]Harris, op. cit., p. 66.

1. The ability to read one-line and two-line sentences with understanding and good oral expression.

2. Ready participation in the reading activities of the group, both as leader and as follower.

3. Increased ability to use picture clues, special features of words, context clues, and phonetic and structural components in word recognition.

4. The development of the ability to read, with ease and satisfaction, the preprimers, primer, and first reader of the basic-reading series.

5. Enjoyment and ease in reading the preprimers and primers of other series.

6. The ability to read without undue vocalization and without finger-pointing or a marker.

7. Increasing ability to make adjustments in reading method and rate for such purposes as recalling details, comprehending the main idea, and following an orderly sequence.

8. The development of skills in noting similarities and differences in known words.

9. The desire to read on many occasions when the class program permits freely chosen activities.[26]

Russell concluded by saying: "These general aims of the beginning reading period can, of course, be modified, expanded, or otherwise changed to meet the needs of a particular child or group of children."[27]

Rapid development of reading skills. When children have progressed in most of the specific reading skills mentioned above they enter a period of rapid learning of

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[26]Russell, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

[27]Ibid.

specific reading attitudes and abilities. The stages
gradually merge together. The stage of rapid development of
reading skills are normally found in the second and third
grades. Russell states that by the end of this period
children should be able to recognize at sight a large number
of words, should be able to work out successfully the pro-
nounciation of many unfamiliar words, should read orally with
fluency, should read silently with good comprehension and at
a rate faster than oral reading, should be able to do factual
reading at a simple level in textbooks and references, and
should be well started on reading for pleasure.[28]

Russell states that the characteristics of the rapid
progress stage are the same as listed for the initial period
of learning to read, with a broadening of many activities.
Specific aims given by Russell in addition to those of the
initial stage of learning to read are summarized as:

    1. A lively interest in reading for pleasure and
       information as shown by voluntary borrowing of
       books, bringing books to school, etc.

    2. An attitude that will lead to a permanent inter-
       est in reading.

    3. A desire to share some special story with others.

    4. The habit of locating material by use of the
       table of contents.

    5. The habit of self-helpfulness in using materials
       to gain information on class interests.

    6. The habit of reading independently for infor-
       mation and pleasure.

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[28]Harris, op. cit., p. 86.

7. The ability to read, with ease and understanding, an average (second) (third) reader.

8. The ability to recognize, accurately and independently, new words in such readers by context, by known parts, by more detailed analysis.

9. The ability to read more rapidly silently than orally.

10. Ability to select and group ideas, answer questions, and follow directions.

11. In the third grade, the ability to master a word phonetically.

12. In third grade, knowledge of physical make-up of a book: (1) title page, (2) table of contents, (3) list of illustrations, (4) index.[29]

Summary

Reading has in the past been taught to achieve such broad goals as eloquent oral reading, equipping individuals to read biblical material, building loyalty to the United States, providing moral lessons, developing interest and appreciation for literature, and building effective silent reading skills and habits.

Since the year 1925, there has been an agreement, among the recognized people in the field of reading, that reading should foster and develop permanent interests in reading and acquire those habits, skills and attitudes that enable children to read efficiently and that broaden and enrich each individual's experiences.

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[29]Russell, op. cit., pp. 208-209.

In general, in the primary grades, children are going through three phases of their development in reading ability. These are: (1) the development of reading readiness; (2) initial success in the first skills of reading; (3) rapid progress in the learning of basic habits, skills and attitudes connected with reading. There is no break between the different stages. The stages gradually merge into the next stage where they are continued. The initial period in learning to read is continuous with both the readiness period and the succeeding stage of rapid development.

The first part of the first grade is usually devoted to preparing for reading by carrying on a program of activities designed to promote readiness. The readiness period includes activities that will meet the needs of the child in emotional, social, physical and mental growth. The teacher plans to promote reading readiness through firsthand experiences and provides a stimulating atmosphere to develop readiness for reading instruction.

During the initial stages of reading the teacher seeks to provide experiences which help the child build a sight vocabulary, develop oral and silent reading skills, acquire means of attacking unknown words and to develop a desire to read. This period is usually found during the first grade.

The objectives of the rapid reading stage are to expand and broaden the aims of the previous stages. It is a period of rapid growth in which the child is becoming a

relatively independent reader. It is found in the second and third grades.

Instructional Patterns of Organization

Historical Instructional Patterns

The history of education shows that both individual and group instruction have had a long history. The art of reading has been taught individually to members of royal families and to people of wealth. Group instruction has been used since the days of early Greece. By 3000 B.C. it had evolved into a well graded sequence of studies with definite aims and works.[30]

Individual instruction predominated as long as the number to be taught was small. As the need to educate the masses spread, group instruction was adopted.

One of the first group instruction practices originated in the Reformation and evolved into the highly organized German Volkschule of the nineteenth century. The leaders of the Protestant Revolt believed that everyone should be able to read and interpret the scriptures. They asserted that: "...it was the inherent right of each child to be

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[30]William S. Gray, "The Evolution of Patterns of Instructional Organization," Reading Instruction in Various Patterns of Grouping, Helen M. Robinson (ed.), Supplementary Educational Monographs, Number 89, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 14.

educated, and the State must not only see that the means are provided, but also require attendance at the schools."[31]

During the next two centuries, German leaders developed the Volkschule into one of the most highly organized, graded systems of elementary education in the world.[32] All pupils in a grade were engaged in the same learning activities, and it was assumed that they would advance at the same rate. Failure to do so resulted in non-promotion.

A second pattern of instructional organization developed in England about this time. The leaders of England did not adopt the German pattern of education as the demand for popular education spread to their country. The ruling class believed that the state was not responsible for mass education. The English proponents for education freed the teachers from the control of bishops through licensing and encouraged the organization of schools by individuals and groups. As a result private schools, dame schools, charity schools, and ragged schools sprang up in England.[33] However, the proponents of popular education persisted for free schools which soon developed due to public opinion.

Andrew Bell, a clergyman, in 1797 set up a plan which provided for instruction of a hundred children under one

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[31]Ibid.

[32]Gray, op. cit., p. 15.

[33]Ibid.

trained teacher with the help of many monitors. Following
instructions given by the teacher, the pupils worked in
groups of ten under the direction of the monitors who had
been trained by the teacher to give the pupils help.

Historical Instructional
Patterns in America

When schools were organized in the thirteen colonies
they were largely under church-state control. Because a
teacher taught pupils of various ages and who were at differ-
ent stages of advancement the individual pattern of instruc-
tion predominated. As cities and the country grew, a need
for the importance of education grew. The first response
was to develop charity schools. This was supplemented by an
effort to establish free public schools by such groups as
the Free School Society of New York City.

The demand for mass education brought about the moni-
torial pattern of group instruction about 1806. This plan
presented an organized scheme of classification and promotion.
The plan was not successful due to the large number of stu-
dents assembled in one room.

Education sank to a low efficiency between the years
1825 and 1840 due to the fact that both group and individual
instruction had meager content, lacked sequence and were
poorly organized. These conditions led Horace Mann to
recommend the adoption of graded elementary schools. The

concept of the graded school spread during the decades that followed.

Preston W. Search, Superintendent of Schools, at Pueblo, Colorado, in 1888 to 1894, is credited with having fathered the first plan for returning to individualized instruction.[34] The Pueblo Plan, as devised by Search maintained the regular class organization but substituted individual activity, guided by the teacher, for group recitations outside regular class periods. One feature of the plan was the adjustment of time needed for completing a course of study to the capacity of the learner. It permitted the pupil to progress as rapidly as he could.

The Batavia Plan was developed by Superintendent John Kennedy of Batavia, New York. Even before the days of accurate measurement in education, it was obvious to Kennedy that the schools were failing to adapt themselves to some individuals. Kennedy devised a plan for coaching "laggards" in 1898. This plan was a method of coaching and encouraging the laggards; of keeping them up with the class. Usually two teachers were assigned in each room, one to conduct class activities and the other to supervise study activities.[35]

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[34]Emmett Albert Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 37.

[35]Guy M. Whipple (ed.) Adapting the Schools to Individual Differences. Twenty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II (Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1925), p. 32.

The Platoon School, also known as the Gary Plan, was
developed in Bluffton, Indiana, by Superintendent
William A. Wirt in 1900. It became more widely known and
used after Wirt assumed the leadership of the Gary, Indiana,
Schools. The plan was not originally conceived as a means
of differentiating instruction but to make it possible for
children who were slow in a subject to increase the time
spent on that subject. The schools were open on Saturdays
for individual instruction and pupils elected the work they
wished to do.[36]

By 1910 various patterns of grouping had been tried.
Paul Monroe's A Cyclopedia of Education made the following
statement:

> An adequate scheme of grouping is essential if
> schools are to provide for increasing numbers of
> children and for maximum thought stimulation; that
> an ideal graded system is one in which all the
> pupils in a specific group are about the same age,
> level of advancement, and capacity to learn; and
> that homogeneous grouping can be approximate only,
> due to the variety of individual differences.[37]

Various efforts to overcome such difficulties con-
tinued at this time. Special classes for the over-age
pupils, the mentally retarded and hard of hearing were tried.
Another plan was to place normal pupils who did not progress

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[36]Whipple, op. cit., p. 39.

[37]William S. Gray, "The Evolution of Patterns of
Instructional Organizations," Reading Instruction in Various
Patterns of Grouping, Supplementary Educational Monographs,
Number 89 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959),
p. 17.

at the same rate as their classmates in separate homogeneous classes.

Following the review of these various efforts to meet the needs of all pupils, Monroe continued to say:

> All the systems described '...are yet more or less in the experimental stage, and some of them involve administrative difficulties which can be met only in exceptional situations. It is evident, however, that all of them constitute important attempts to produce a system, which, while utilizing the economies and efficiency that result from a training of children in homogeneous groups, shall nevertheless have due regard to the individual in respect to those points at which his interest demands some variation from the standards imposed upon the group.'[38]

Present Day Instructional Patterns

Organization of instruction on an individual basis was introduced by Frederic Burk at the San Francisco Normal School in 1913. This is generally conceded to be the first carefully organized effort to individualize instruction.[39] Burk's plans were based on individual progress and promotion. The features of the program included self-instructive text-books organized by specific goals, individual progress cards permitting an accurate record of pupil achievement, self-instruction bulletins, and testing and promoting pupils when work on a subject on one grade was completed.

One of the limitations of Burk's plan was that the basic principles had not been developed in a public school

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[38]Gray, op. cit., p. 18.

[39]Betts, op. cit., p. 39.

situation. Carleton Washburne, a former faculty member of Burk's, undertook Burk's work and developed it in Winnetka, Illinois.

William S. Gray clearly defined five basic principles underlying the Winnetka Plan. They were:

(1) a clear definition of the essentials of the fundamental subjects in terms of units of achievement; (2) self-instructive, self-corrective practice materials in these subjects; (3) diagnostic tests to measure achievement; (4) individual subject promotions, within certain limits, on the basis of achievement in the fundamental subjects; (5) and large emphasis on group and creative activities during certain periods of the day.[40]

According to the plan, all children were required to master the common essentials; however, the time taken to master a skill or knowledge was adjusted to meet each child's needs and abilities. Each child worked individually on his own assignments and progressed at his own rate.

A plan for differentiating instruction was developed by Helen Parkhurst in Dalton, Massachusetts. The chief value of the plan lay in the freedom of the child to proceed at his own rate. The essential elements of the plan included: first, a type of individualization which permitted children to work in terms of their own capacity; second, carefully prepared assignments and sets of directions; third, elimination of a time schedule; fourth, freedom for the pupil to pursue his

[40]Betts, op. cit., p. 40

own interest; and fifth, opportunity for the pupil to learn co-operation.[41]

During the last thirty years efforts to improve patterns of instruction have continued at an accelerated pace. Experiments have been carried on with sub-class and intergrade grouping. The phrase "individualized teaching and self-selection" has been adopted to distinguish an instructional pattern from provisions for individual differences within a group.[42]

The Thirty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, entitled The Grouping of Pupils, makes a distinction between the two types of grouping. Grouping denotes a classification of individuals, such as grade groups or ability groups which is based on the ability to achieve and learn. The second type of grouping is based on sociological factors. The groups are held together by common interests and objectives. It is with this latter type of grouping, heterogeneous, that this investigation was concerned.

Summary

Continuous effort for centuries to improve instructional patterns has been carried out by educators throughout the world. Throughout this period both group and individual

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[41]Betts, op. cit., p. 41.

[42]Gray, op. cit., p. 19.

instruction have played significant roles. The conclusion
reached during the last century is that efficient teaching
is not inherent in any single pattern of instructional organi-
zation. However, it can be achieved through the use of
different types of class organization, an organization that
is designed to meet the needs of each individual child.

Each generation has built upon the experiences and
research of the past and has sought to improve existing in-
structional patterns or to develop new patterns. Further ·
effort is necessary to find new types of class organization
and patterns of teaching to achieve the goals of a good edu-
cation.

Basal Readers and Their Use

Historical Development of
Basal Readers

During the colonial period, 1607 to 1776, the most
famous reading book was the New England Primer. The New
England Primer was a Church book, but included much more
than the earlier Catechism books. The book was a combina-
tion of religious manual, catechism, and speller and for over
a hundred years was the chief school book. Reeder stated
that it was a short step in the direction of a seculariza-
tion of the course of study.[43]

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[43]Rudolph R. Reeder, The Historical Development of
School Readers and Method in Teaching Reading (New York:
Columbia University, 1900), pp. 9-12.

Noah Webster constructed a series of readers under the title Grammatical Institute. This first appeared as a single book and in 1790 it was offered as three separate texts; one of these, The American Spelling Book, commonly known as "Webster's Blue Back Speller" became one of the most influential books America has ever known. These books had a moralistic tone but revealed the influence of a nationalistic spirit.[44]

The first school reader in the modern sense of the term published in America was An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking. This was the third book of the series of Noah Webster. In the preface the author says: "In the choice pieces, I have been attentive to the political interest of America."[45] The book contained many selections by American statesmen and patriots.

Lyman Cobb was probably the first to compile a graded set of readers in America. Cobb's North American Reader stressed the objective of oral reading that belonged to the period 1776 to 1840. In the preface to the 1835 edition, Cobb states: "...give due attention to accent, emphasis, pauses, and the whole accompanied with expressive looks and significant gestures."[46]

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[44]Paul Witty, Reading in Modern Education (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1949), pp. 2-3.

[45]Reeder, op. cit., p. 36.

[46]Lillian Gray, Teaching Children to Read (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1957), p. 33.

The series formed a progressive set of three books.
Two others were later added, making a five book series. The
books aimed more at instruction and the immediate interest
of the child than at literature. They comprised stories,
information lessons about animals, and a great many defini-
tions, forming a sort of child's dictionary. All the words
in each lesson not contained in preceding lessons were
placed before it with the division, pronounciation, accentua-
tion and definition noted.[47]

After 1840, reading books were produced almost en-
tirely in graded series. The great publishing success in the
school-text field was the famous McGuffey Readers, the first
complete set of which appeared between 1836 and 1844.
McGuffey's books were successful partly because they were
the first attempt to present a graded series consisting of
one reader for each grade of the elementary school.[48]

In range of subject matter it swept almost the entire
field of human interest; morals, economics, politics, litera-
ture, history, science and philosophy. McGuffey departed
from the religious, moralistic, and adult content character-
istic of previous authors and introduced materials that were
realistic situations from the child's own background. The

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[47]Reeder, op. cit., p. 48.

[48]Russell, op. cit., p. 62.

traits were lessons of industry, thrift, economy, kindness, generosity, honesty, courage and duty.[49]

Although McGuffey graded his readers only by a feeling for what children could do, modern educators bear out the fact that they increased gradually in difficulty. It was the beginning of controlled vocabularly.

From 1860 to 1880 little change took place in the character of school readers. Several new series were compiled during this period but the McGuffey Readers held the forefront.

Supplementary readers were ushered in about 1880 and showed two trends of development. In many schools the use of supplementary readers resulted in a duplication of series in order to 'freshen the student's interest' and to master the process to read by repetition of words in new combinations. In other schools supplementary reading supplied compressed classics and literary wholes.[50]

In the years between 1880 and 1925 many different sets of graded readers were produced. These textbooks evidenced improvement in terms of better mechanical make-up, including the use of colored pictures, in the number of different words used, and inclusion of more variety in story content.[51]

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[49]Reeder, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

[50]Reeder, op. cit., p. 58.

[51]Witty, op. cit., p. 4.

Reeder summed up the historical development of school readers to the period of 1900 with the following:

1. The era of one book, the church primer or bible.
2. The era of transition from the Bible to secular material, using one or two books between the primer and the Bible. 3. The era of one series. 4. The era of supplementary readers. 5. The era of classic literature.[52]

Around 1927, preprimers for use in the first grade reading program were added to the basal reader series.[53] Supplementary materials to accompany the basal readers, such as flash cards, teacher's manuals, tests, and practice exercises also entered the scene.

Present-day Use of Basal Readers

In some schools of former days reading was done only from readers. The modern program consists of much more than reading from one book; but here as in other school practices, tradition dies hard.[54] Within recent years basic readers have changed and have improved in content, format, and mechanics of writing perhaps more than any other school texts. In general the modern basic reading series is constructed on four main principles, mainly: (1) it provides continuity of growth; (2) it provides for a wide variety of reading

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[52]Reeder, op. cit., p. 60.

[53]Gertrude Hildreth, Teaching Reading (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1958), p. 225.

[54]Russell, op. cit., p. 147.

activities; (3) it provides a complete organization of reading experiences; and (4) it provides for a worth-while content of ideas.[55]

Modern basic readers have been carefully written for gradation, variety, organization and content; however, these are only a part of the whole reading program; other materials have considerable value. "The modern teacher gives considerable place to a basic series in the program (reports indicate that about 95 per cent of teachers use basic series) but they never hesitate to use other materials as well."[56]

Russell states that a typical modern series of readers may include the following:

> A reading readiness book
> Two or three preprimers
> A primer and first reader
> Two second readers
> Two third readers
> One or two each of fourth, fifth, and sixth readers
> Pupil workbooks to accompany the above
> Supplementary or enrichment books related to the
>   basic books
> Supplementary materials such as word cards, charts,
>   and tests of related content[57]

In most American elementary schools the current practice is to choose a set of basal readers and to follow fairly closely the methods recommended by the authors, as explained in the manuals for teachers which accompany the

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[55]Russell, op cit., pp. 148-149.

[56]Russell, op. cit., p. 149.

[57]Russell, op. cit., p. 151.

readers. A plan for the use of basic readers that can be

found in different manuals looks essentially as that found

in Children Learn to Read by David Russell.

- A. Developing readiness for reading
  1. Through a check on adequate background experiences
  2. Through developing a meaningful vocabulary or concepts
  3. Through stimulating interest and setting up worthy reading purposes
- B. Guiding the first silent reading
  1. To stimulate interest in the selection
  2. To develop understanding of the whole
  3. To develop the habit of reading for a purpose
  4. To promote versatility in approaching lessons with different purposes
  5. To foster understanding of sequence and organization
  6. To discover words, concepts, and larger ideas which require further study
- C. Rereading for specific purposes
  1. To prepare for some worth-while activity based on the selection, such as story telling, dramatization, finding an interesting word, discovering a well-liked character, and answering questions
- D. Building essential habits and skills
  1. To develop word-recognition abilities through the use of picture clues, context clues, phonetic analysis and structural analysis and related techniques
  2. To increase comprehension of important ideas in words, sentences, paragraphs or complete selections
  3. To give practice in oral, silent, or audience reading
  4. Use of charts, blackboards, workbooks, and teacher-prepared materials related to the content of the selection
  5. Evaluation of pupils' progress by means of observations, informal tests, word games, and the reading of related materials
  6. To help the individual child as time allows

E. Enrichment activities
   1. Encouraging discussion, organization of
      ideas, critical thinking about the
      materials, further reading of an inde-
      pendent and research nature and other
      art activities
   2. Using reading in planning excursions,
      dramatic play, construction and other art
      activities[58]

The most common practice for carrying on basic in-
struction in reading is the use of the three group organiza-
tion. After a reading survey test has been given the class
is divided into three groups on the basis of ability; the
fast-moving, the average-moving and the slow-moving. The
composition of these reading groups is flexible.

Experiments have shown that at least an hour should
be devoted to reading in the morning and half an hour in the
afternoon. Some schools devote an hour in the afternoon to
reading also. The teacher divides her time among the three
groups spending twenty minutes with each group in the morning
and from ten to twenty minutes with each group in the after-
noon. Children are working on reading activities when the
teacher is with the other groups. This provides from ninety
to one hundred twenty minutes per day of reading during class
time for each child.

The typical lesson for each group follows the plan
found on page 35 as stated by Russell. A fast-moving group
may need very little of the extensive lesson plan; a slow

58Russell, op. cit., p. 153.

group may require a much slower pace and more detailed activities.

In 1953 Anderson surveyed current trends in the teaching of reading. He found that some schools were placing more reliance on several sets of basal readers and supplementary readers than upon strict adherence to a single basal reading series.[59]

In 1957 Stewart made a survey of the instructional practices in reading in 107 cities of over 25,000 population in forty states. The responding schools indicated that a single basal, a co-basal or a tri-basal series was used in 90 per cent of the schools. More than half of those responding indicated the use of a single basal reader series.[60]

Staiger surveyed 48 states and Hawaii and had a return of 77.07 per cent. The responding schools indicated that 69 per cent of them used one series of readers. Twenty per cent indicated two series, and 5.7 per cent used three series co-basally and 5.1 per cent used, more than three series.[61]

[59] Irving H. Anderson, "Current Trends in the Teaching of Reading," University of Michigan School of Education Bulletin, XXIV (January, 1953), 51.

[60] David K. Stewart, "Values and Limitations of Basal Readers," Materials for Reading, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 86 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 52.

[61] Ralph C. Staiger, "How are Basal Readers Used," Elementary English, XXXV (January, 1958), 46.

Gates made a two year study from 1956 to 1958 and
found that basal reading systems were universally used;
about 99 per cent of all schools used basal readers. He
found that many used one series for basal work exclusively
in grades one and two; others used two series co-basally,
and others used more than two. The mean numbers of basal
series used were: grade two, 1.5; grade three, 1.7. Gates
concluded:

   It may therefore be said that the use of one or
   two sets of basal reading books and materials, and
   a teaching procedure embodying the main features
   outlined in basal manuals is the prevailing form
   of reading instruction in todays' schools.[62]

He continued to say that basal readers do tempt the teacher
to pursue a good deal of mass instruction. The books are so
easily managed and skillfully arranged sequentially that
they make it easy to put whole classes or large groups to-
gether for instruction.[63]

   These studies all support the conclusion that there
is a trend to move away from the single series basic reader.
However, it is evident that at least 95 per cent of the
schools use basic reading texts. Research has been non-
existent at the primary grade level to show the superiority
of the approach of a single series text to that of multiple
series texts.

[62]Arthur I. Gates, "Improvements in Reading Possible
in the Near Future," The Reading Teacher, XII (December,
1958), 84.

   [63]Ibid.

The traditional core of the elementary reading program has been the basic reader. Witham states:

> Within the past decade however, educational research has pointed out the fallacy and ineffectiveness of the "one for all" approach in meeting the individual needs of each pupil--particularly with respect to the slow and talented readers. The movement away from a dependence on a single reader has continued...No basic reader can hope to understand the particular culture of each school and community and present stories which hold appeal and meaning to all of the various socio-economic backgrounds of children.[64]

O'Leary stated:

> ...despite the increasing use of multi-level reading kits, this basic reading series program still continues to maintain its status as the most widely used and the most popularly known equipment for one important part of an effective reading program--namely, the developmental phase wherein sequential aspects are analyzed, recognized, planned for and carefully paced through a series of graded readers arranged in levels of reading difficulty.[65]

Many of the authors of reading series and leading textbooks do not recommend a program of reading instruction based on a single basic reading series. Following are statements from reading authorities to support this fact.

Ruth Strang states that the single basic reading text does not meet individual differences in reading abilities and interest. The recognition of these abilities in every

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[64]A. D. Witham, "Basal and Co-Basal Reading Series," Elementary English, XL (February, 1963), 194.

[65]H. F. O'Leary, "Preserve the Basic Reading Program," Education, LXXXIV (September, 1963), 12.

grade has given impetus to the individualizing of reading
instruction. It was first thought that the problem of in-
dividual differences could be solved through intra-class
grouping, into three groups, slow, average and superior.
"Although grouping of this kind was in the right direction
it did not provide for the individual differences that still
existed in a group."[66]

David Russell states, "Although modern basic readers
have been carefully written for gradation, variety, organi-
zation and content the good teacher uses them as only part
of her whole reading program."[67] Russell further stated:

> The modern teacher, then, gives considerable place
> to a basic series in her program (reports indicate
> that over 95 per cent of teachers use basic series),
> but she never hesitates to use other materials as
> well. With the concept of "reading for use,"
> materials from other curricular fields will naturally
> take their place alongside the basic series as part
> of the materials of the reading program.[68]

Durrell stated: "Basal readers become in most schools,
the course of study in reading skills for most grades--but
for the average pupil only."[69] Durrell stated the belief
that slower learners and faster learners must be provided
with separate reading programs and materials if they are to
develop their reading powers effectively. He said that no

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[66]Ruth Strang, The Improvement of Reading (New York:
McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), pp. 39-40.

[67]Russell, op. cit., p. 106.

[68]Russell, op. cit., pp. 106-107.

[69]Durrell, op. cit., p. 23.

basal reader can provide enough material to assure every
child mastery of each phase of reading instruction nor does
a child learn to read by the use of a basal reader alone.[70]

Dolch made this point: "The fundamental problem in
use of a basic reader is that the reader is one-grade read-
ing level and the class in any room is at anywhere from 3 to
7 grade reading levels."[71] He further concluded that

...the children still need practice in reading at
their true reading level. That is they need a free
reading period when each child gets a book at his
true level and reads it with interest and understand-
ing.[72]

He contends that this is a necessity under any plan of using
a basic reader because no single basic reader can be at five
levels.

Paul Witty felt that teachers in the past have depended
almost entirely upon the use of a single textbook for instruc-
tion in reading. Today teachers recognize the need for a
broader approach in reading. A balanced reading program by
offering wide reading experiences from a wide variety of
materials will care for individual differences.[73]

Ruth Strickland stated: "Some teachers and educa-
tional leaders stay close to textbooks because these are

[70]Durrell, op. cit., p. 29.

[71]Edward William Dolch, Teaching Primary Reading
(Champaign Illinois: The Garrard Press, 1950), p. 326.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Paul Witty, Reading in Modern Education (Boston:
D. C. Heath and Company, 1949), p. 136.

carefully written (especially the so-called "readers") with a controlled vocabulary and simple structure."[74] However, Strickland contends that children, in their own speech, do not confine themselves to simple sentences and their speaking vocabulary goes beyond that of the reading textbooks.

Hildreth's viewpoint is that a criterion for a successful program is the extent to which varied reading instruction provisions are made for children of similar age and grade level. She felt that today's lockstep can be broken because of the extensive experimentation in grouping and personalized instruction. She stated:

> With a supply of information books and recreational reading at hand it is no longer necessary to limit reading lessons to standard lesson books. Today readers have ceased to be the only resource for instruction even in the primary grades.[75]

Hildreth further stated:

> The better plan for the primary grades is to purchase multiple of copies of each of the leading series, from five hundred to a thousand books in all, and to maintain the collection in a central depository in the building from which the teacher makes selection in any needed level, and quantity.[76]

Harris contended that materials for a rich, well-rounded reading program should include: "Several sets of basal readers, in numbers appropriate for the groups using

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[74]Ruth G. Strickland, The Language Arts (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1951), p. 313.

[75]Gertrude Hildreth, Teaching Reading (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1958), p. 24.

[76]Hildreth, op. cit., p. 273.

them, ranging in difficulty from readers appropriate for the lowest group to difficult readers intended for the grade."[77]

Summary

During the colonial period, 1607 to 1776 the most famous reading book was the New England Primer. The New England Primer was followed by the American Spelling Book which held the field during the period of 1790 to 1820. The first graded series of readers, books with vocabulary control, were the McGuffey Readers which appeared around 1830. From that time to the present graded basic series have been produced.

Basal readers are used today in as many as 95 per cent of the elementary schools. There has been a trend to move away from the single basal reading series to multiple basal reading series. However, there has been no research in the primary grades which proves the superiority of multiple basal readers over a single basal reading series.

Many authors of reading series and textbooks emphasize that the reading instructional program should not be based upon a single basal reading series. These authors recommend a reading program based upon several basal reader series, supplementary materials and library materials.

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[77]Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (third edition; New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1960), p. 129.

Individualized Reading Programs

Dissatisfaction with present outcomes of reading in-
struction, meeting individual needs and interest, has led to
a search for new instructional patterns in the classroom.
Generally, most schools have been following the basal reader
group approach in the teaching of reading.

Under such a program most children have learned to
read. However, the slow child and gifted child have not had
a program commensurate with their abilities. It is for these
reasons that educators have been seeking a new approach to
the teaching of reading. One new development has been the
individualized reading approach.

Historical Development of
Individualized Reading

When reading instruction was first provided for
children, it was taught on the individualized basis. The
child was taught as an individual by a scribe, a priest, a
tutor or some member of his family. In the early Dame
Schools in America each child was taught individually and
progressed at his own rate. A small group of children would
gather in the Dame's kitchen and each one would recite to her
from his own place in the Bible or primer.[78] Finally mass
education was extended to all children and with the publish-
ing of the McGuffey Readers, mass instruction followed.

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[78]Nila B. Smith, "Classroom Organization: An Age-Old
Problem with New Slants," The Reading Teacher, XI (December,
1957), p. 73.

In the 1920's intelligence testing was advanced and its results pointed out individual differences in ability. With this, experiments in individualized instruction were being carried out in a few places.

Various attempts in the past have been initiated due to the recognition of the differences in children in capacity and achievement. A number of plans for adjusting instruction to individual differences was presented in the Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. The plans were discussed in a previous section of this report. Of particular significance to individualized reading was the Winnetka Plan as reported by Washburne. According to Washburne's plan, all children were required to master the common essentials but each child worked individually on his own assignments and progressed at his own rate.

Washburne stated that reading, "the cornerstone of the entire school edifice above the first grade, fortunately is the most easily individualized."[79] Washburne presented two plans for individualizing basal reading instruction. One plan made use of materials prepared for use in the Winnetka Schools for use in an individualized plan. The other plan involved the differentiated use of well-known basal reading materials.

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[79]Emmett A. Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 41.

Washburne indicated that there were difficulties of
individualizing instruction for beginning readers. He stated:

    The most difficult part of the entire curriculum
    to individualize is beginning reading. The children
    come to school with no study habits and with none of
    the tools for learning that can be relied upon in
    later grades. We rely upon the pupil's skill in
    reading to make self-instruction possible in grades
    above the first.[80]

Present-day Individualized Reading

Individualized reading recognizes, accepts and
respects the fact that children differ and that each child
is an individual in his own right, with his own thoughts,
secrets, drives, motivations, will, wishes, desires and
learning make-up. It also recognizes that for each child,
reading is a personal, individual experience and often a
private affair. It attempts to meet individual differences
by dealing with them individually. Reading guidance and
teaching are tailored to the child. Each child is taught
the reading skills when he needs them. Therefore, he sees
the need for these skills as important and worth achieving.

Individualized reading recognizes that a child's
interest is a great motivating and sustaining factor in
learning. Interest is that inner drive that impels a child
to stay with the experience he is having and helps him to
learn and master any necessary skill to complete the experi-
ence. Interest encourages the child to want to share the

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[80]Ibid.

reading and it further helps him to organize his motivations and his thinking.

Individualized reading has a greater awareness of the child's role in his own learning process. It recognizes that to be a reader a child has to know how to manage himself; he must at times initiate, organize and construct his own reading experiences and reactions. It not only allows, but encourages the basic elements or drives of self-selection, self-seeking and self-pacing.

Olsen states that these concepts are consistent with a child's maturity and his needs. As applied to the reading program a child explores his classroom environment seeking reading materials; he then selects books which are appropriate for him at the time. The child has the opportunity to read at his own pace in which the teacher is responsible to furnish the experiences to each child at a rate which will assure success at the child's maturity level.[81]

Lazar states that in considering the basic elements of self-seeking, self-selection and self-pacing, it can be seen that individualized reading helps the child to help himself. In self-selection the child has the opportunity in his regular school reading time to choose his reading materials according to his interests and drives. In order to allow the principle of self-selection to operate at its

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[81]Jeannette Veatch, _Individualizing Your Reading Program_ (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959), pp. 89-95.

optimum a wide array of books are needed. Self-selection
gives the child the opportunity to explore the world of
books.[82]

In self-seeking the child has the opportunity to ex-
plore his reading environment and seek from it those experi-
ences that are in tune with his maturity. He is encouraged
to seek the help he needs to be a better reader with the
materials he can handle.[83]

In self-pacing the child has the opportunity to read
at his own pace the materials he has chosen independently
and learns how to fit his pacing into his maturity.[84]

Veatch stated that in actual practice variations and
confusions exist in individualized reading. The term indi-
vidualized reading seems to imply that grouping never occurs.
This is not the case as there is need for grouping in in-
dividualized reading; grouping is employed as needed and for
specific purposes. The term self-selection implies the
denial of the instructional role of the teacher. This also
is not the case; each pupil selects, with teacher guidance,
the material he will read.

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[82]May Lazar, "A Practical Guide to Individualized
Reading" (New York: Board of Education, City of New York
Bureau of Educational Research, Publication No. 40, October,
1960), p. 7.

[83]Ibid.

[84]Ibid.

Although some variation exists among the different individualized reading programs, it has certain prime characteristics that occur regardless of the variations in practice that are found throughout the country. The characteristics of individualized reading are: (1) self-selection of materials by pupils; (2) individual conferences between each pupil and teacher, and (3) groups organized for other than reason of ability or proficiency in reading.[85]

Elements that are essential in carrying out an individualized reading program are unanimously agreed upon by proponents of individualized reading. Lazar,[86] Veatch,[87] Groff[88] and Dietrich[89] agree that the following elements are necessary in carrying out an individualized program:

1. A large classroom library made up of basal and supplementary readers, trade books brought from home by the children or borrowed from libraries.

2. A free choice by the children of the reading materials depending upon interest or reading ability.

[85]Veatch, op. cit., p. ix.

[86]Lazar, op. cit., pp. 27-55.

[87]Veatch, op. cit., pp. 38-58.

[88]Patrick J. Groff, "Getting Started with Individualized Reading," Elementary English, XXXVII (February, 1960), pp. 105-111.

[89]Dorothy M. Dietrich, "Today's Research: Tomorrow's Readers," Reading in a Changing Society, International Reading Association Conference Proceedings, Vol. IV (New York: Scholastic Magazine, 1959), p. 233.

3. A follow-up activity which may be a series of questions devised by the teacher pertaining to each book, a general report of the book read, a visual presentation of the highlights of the book, or a discussion of the book with other children, etc.

4. A conference between each child and the class-room teacher, the number of conferences to be determined by need, with accurate records kept by the teacher.

5. A reading skill program which may be taught individually, to a small flexible group, or the whole class depending upon the needs.

Recent Studies of Individualized Reading Programs

Gates studied the merits of a modern systematic method of teaching reading and an "opportunistic" method of teaching reading which was highly individualized in Horace Mann School, Teachers College, in 1923 to 1924. Twenty-five pairs of matched first graders were used in the experiment. The purpose of the investigation was to determine which method was superior. The systematic method followed a definite course of study with a period for daily lessons prescribed, while the opportunistic method utilized a less definite program of studies, activities were designed more in accordance with the interests of the pupils, and reading instruction was highly individualized. The findings in respect to achievement in oral and silent reading were favorable to systematic teaching. The evidence indicated that the opportunistic method was ad-vantageous in respect to the development of interest,

initiative, determination and other personal and social traits.[90]

Zirbes, Keller and Miner studied the merits of an intensive systematic approach in reading with independent, individualized reading in the second grade in 1925. The results showed that the average growth in reading ability was the same for each group. The brighter children profited more from independent reading and the slower children from intensive instruction.[91]

In 1938, children in the primary grades at the Nassau School in East Orange, New Jersey, selected their own reading materials from a large number of easy books. Boney and Leman conducted a study to determine whether or not the children who received reading instruction from a wide variety of books with an uncontrolled vocabulary did as well as children who used preprimers, and primers of a basal reading program with a controlled vocabulary. The conclusions reached from the findings of the study were:

> Our study shows that when one is working with children of average and above average intelligence, there can be far greater choice in the use of materials in the beginning phase of first grade reading than modern reading programs permit. There is no real evidence that the common practice of selecting the reading materials for children of this level on the basis of the intelligence quotient is good.[92]

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[90]William S. Gray, "Reading," _Encyclopedia of Educational Research_ (third edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 1121.

[91]_Ibid._

[92]C. Dewitt Boney and Edna Leman, "Individuality in Beginning Reading," _Education_ LIX (September, 1938), pp. 17-20.

They reached the conclusion that reading can be
taught individually in classes of approximately thirty
children; the teacher is in a position to deal with the
intellectual, emotional and physical side of each child,
and the most significant was that the teacher was able to
give the needed help to each child.[93]

Karlin reported.the results of an experiment in
Pittsburg, California, in 1954. Third grade classes were
used in a sixteen month study. The control group used the
basal reader approach and the experimental group used an
individualized reading approach. The results of testing
showed that the children who participated in the control
basal reader group made slightly greater gains in vocabulary
and comprehension than the children in the individualized
reading group.[94]

Cyrog reported on a three year study conducted during
the years 1954 to 1957. Individualized reading was used
continuously throughout the study. Although no control
group was used the test results showed that: (1) indivi-
dualized reading can be successfully used in first grade;
and (2) when individualized reading is used as the basic

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[93]Boney, op. cit., p. 20

[94]Robert Karlin, "Some Reactions to Individualized
Reading," The Reading Teacher, XI (December, 1957), pp. 95-
98.

reading method for a period of two or three years, better than average results occur.[95]

In 1956 Anderson reported a study which included laboratory and public school children. The laboratory school children were introduced to reading when ready for it by highly individualized methods. The use made of basal readers in the experimental group was limited and not systematic. The children were allowed to choose their own books and read at their own rates. The public school children used a systematic approach. A comparative study was made of the two during their first year. The investigation concluded that "the basic systematic approach employed by the public school enables the children to learn to read early and reduces the individual variation in age of learning to read."[96] Conversely, the practice used by the laboratory school delayed the age of beginning reading and maximized the individual variation which occurred in this connection.

In 1956 Gray reviewed all the studies he could secure in an international survey of individualized reading. More than four-fifths of the studies were conducted in English speaking countries. The conclusions of his studies were:

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[95]Francis Cryog, "The Principal and His Staff Move Forward in Developing New Ways of Thinking About Reading," California Journal of Elementary Education, XXVII (February, 1959), pp. 178-87.

[96]William S. Gray, "Reading," Encyclopedia of Educational Research (third edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 1121.

(1) the results in research do not indicate conclusively which of the various methods in use is best; (2) specific methods of teaching reading secure equally good results among all members of the group. This fact was revealed in practically every experiment which reported the distribution of scores made; (3) contrasting methods of teaching produced different results; and (4) good initial progress in reading resulted from emphasis on both meaning and word recognition.[97]

The Los Angeles County Schools conducted a two year study in the years 1955 to 1957. A comparative study was used to see if self-selection (individualized reading) in reading could be successfully carried out in the second grade. The control and experimental groups consisted of four classes each. The children were comparable in mental age, intelligence and socio-economic background. The teachers were matched in educational training and experience. In the control group conventional reading using the basic reader was used and the experimental group used self-selection. The results of standardized tests showed that the self-selection procedure produced significantly greater gains in the areas of reading vocabulary, reading comprehension and total reading over the conventional basic text group. Twenty-five per cent of the control group had a total reading gain of more than 1.6 years, while 46 per cent of the experimental

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[97]Gray, op. cit., p. 1122.

group scored within this range. The conclusion reached was
that self-selection (individualized reading) can be suc-
cessfully used in the second grade.[98] A principal of one of
the involved schools stated:

> For the first time I believe I am teaching reading
> in accordance with my knowledge of the way children
> grow and develop. This is a reading program which
> has no quarrel with what we know about how children
> learn. For any teacher truly interested in meeting
> individual needs self-selection in reading is the
> answer.[99]

During the period from September 1956 through June
1959, the New York City Schools conducted a survey of
approximately 80 schools and 200 classes engaged in develop-
ing individualized reading. The study involved all grades
from the first to the sixth. The purpose of the study was
to find practices and approaches which would meet speci-
fically the needs, interests, and the ranges of ability of
the children. These studies and an evaluation of the find-
ings seemed to point to the fact that the solution lay in a
truly individual approach to reading.

A questionnaire dealing with teacher's evaluations of
individualized reading was submitted to a number of teachers
who had been working with this approach. In summing up the
responses it was evident that these teachers felt that indi-
vidualized reading with its emphasis on wide reading revealed

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[98]Marian Jenkins, "Self-Selection in Reading," The
Reading Teacher, XI (December, 1957), pp. 84-90.

[99]Jenkins, op. cit., p. 85.

that children were reading more, learning more, and making
reading an intimate and integral part of their daily living
and thinking.[100]

The evidence gathered in the study by standardized
tests indicated that pupils tended to make larger gains on
standardized reading tests with individualized reading than
with the program that was more commonly used for a commen-
surate amount of school time.[101]

Bohnhorst and Sellars reported a study undertaken by
one first-grade, two second-grade, and two third-grade
teachers to ascertain the merits of an individualized read-
ing program versus a basal reading program. The last half
of the school year was divided into two periods of eight
weeks each. Each of the five teachers proceeded with a
basal program during one of the periods; during the other
period she pursued an individualized reading program with
the top reading group. In conclusion the authors stated:

> The net result from these exploratory findings is
> only a suggestion which might be used in guiding
> further more rigorously controlled investigations...
> the suggestion is that in the longer haul indivi-
> dualized instruction may enhance the development of
> abler readers.[102]

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[100]May Lazar, "A Practical Guide to Individualized
Reading," (New York: Board of Education, City of New York
Bureau of Educational Research, Publication No. 40, October,
1960), p. 121.

[101]Lazar, op. cit., p. 135.

[102]Ben A. Bohnhorst and Sophi Sellars, "Individualized
Reading Instruction vs. Basal Textbook Instruction: Some
Tentative Explorations," Elementary English, XXVI (March,
1959), p. 190.

Sartain made a study at Roseville, Minnesota, during the school year 1958-1959. The study was to determine whether second graders would make greater progress in reading skills when taught by the individual self-seeking approach or when taught by the basal reader approach. Ten classes were used in the experiment. Five classes began in the individualized reading approach and five classes began in the basic reader approach. The basic reading approach grouped the children according to ability. At the end of a three month period the classes were switched and the five classes of individualized reading were grouped by ability and taught by the basic reader approach. The basic reader group at the end of the three month period were then taught by the individualized approach. At the end of the six month study, Sartain concluded from the statistical results that: (1) second graders make more progress during the first three months of school than during the second three months regardless of methods; (2) capable students make the same gains in reading under both methods; (3) slower pupils make a greater gain following the basic reader program in vocabulary; and (4) individual conferences provide strong motivation.[103]

[103]Harr W. Sartain, "The Roseville Experiment with Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, XIII (April, 1960), pp. 277-81.

Sartain stated:

> In summary, because this study and others that have
> been carefully controlled show that the individualized
> method does not produce better reading gains than a
> strong basal program, there is no reason to forfeit
> the advantages of a well-planned basic system. In-
> stead the individual conferences should be obtained
> by their addition to the basic reader plan.[104]

Karlin reported on a doctoral investigation of

Clare Walker in Michigan. Walker used 456 children which

were matched in reading ability, intelligence quotient and

socio-economic background in an experiment using individual-

ized reading group and the basic reading group in reading

gains. The children in individualized reading did however,

show greater interest in reading and read more books than .

the basic reading group.[105]

In 1960, Izzo compared the word identification

achievement of pupils taught by the individualized method

with that of pupils taught by the group method in beginning

reading in the first grade. Izzo found that: (1) no signifi-

cant differences existed in the effectiveness of the two

teaching methods, individual and group, in the teaching of

word identification in beginning reading to selected first

graders; (2) the children in group instruction tended to

perform more effectively in the use of phonetic analysis;

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[104]Sartain, op. cit., p. 281.

[105]Robert Karlin, "Some Reactions to Individualized
Reading," The Reading Teacher, XI (December, 1957), pp. 97-
98.

(3) children in the experimental group performed as effectively as the control group in the use of word form, meaning of opposites and pictures association; (4) the girls who were taught by the individualized method performed as effectively in the use of word identification as the girls taught by the group method, the same fact was true for the boys; and (5) regardless of the teaching method, the youngest and oldest first grade pupils made effective use of word identification.[106]

Two groups of first graders were used for the study. The teachers of the groups were equal in training and experience. The children were equivalent in age, reading readiness, and mental ability.

In Braidford's study, in 1960, using the same subjects that Izzo had used, the reading comprehension achievement of two groups of first grade children, one group taught by an individual method and the other taught by a group method, was compared. Based upon standardized test results the study revealed the following conclusions: (1) there was no significant difference in the reading comprehension achievement of pupils taught by the individual method as compared to those taught by the group method; (2) there was no significant difference for various age groups taught by the

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[106]Ruth Kelley Izzo, "A Comparison of Teaching Methods," New York University, New York, 1960, Dissertation Abstracts, XXI (November, 1960), pp. 1138-39.

group method or individualized method; (3) the range of achievement in reading comprehension was similar in both groups; and (5) for both teaching methods, a significant relationship existed between reading readiness and reading comprehension achievement; however, only those children taught by the group method showed a significant relationship between mental ability and comprehension achievement.[107]

An action research project was undertaken in the Alachua County Schools, Florida, in 1960. Two second grade classes participated in the study. One class used an individualized reading program and the other class served as a control group using reading groups and a reading series. There were no differences between the two classes in I.Q. scores. In four months, the control group gained an average of 3.04 months; the experimental group gained an average of 7.32 months. Gordon concluded that the individualized reading program was demonstrably superior to the standard reading program. "Not only did pupils achieve better on a standardized test but they read more and increased in self-confidence.[108]

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[107]Margret Braidford, "A Comparison of Two Teaching-Methods, Individual and Group, In the Teaching of Comprehension in Beginning Reading to Selected First Grade Children in the Public Schools of Great Neck, New York," New York University, New York, 1960. Dissertation Abstracts, XX (October, 1960), pp. 4600-01.

[108]Ira J. Gordon, "An Experiment in Individualized Reading," Childhood Education XXXVIII (November, 1961), p. 113.

In 1961 Sperry made a study of three reading instructional patterns; the basal, the individualized, and a pattern termed unclassified. The reading instructional patterns were used by 145 teachers in grades one, two, and three and were identified by means of a questionnaire; relationships were then determined between reading achievement of pupils as measured by standardized tests. Sperry concluded that the individualized instructional pattern was significantly superior to the basal and the unclassified patterns in promoting reading achievement.[109]

Adams concluded an experiment in 1962 in the Englewood, Colorado Schools with first grade children. Adam's study was undertaken to determine the strengths and weaknesses of two reading programs, the individualized reading program and a modified basal program. Based upon standardized tests the study revealed the following conclusions: (1) both reading programs were effective in teaching reading to first grade children; (2) the individualized reading group had a larger sight vocabulary than the modified reading group; (3) no significant differences existed between the two groups in word discrimination; (4) the two groups did not differ widely in silent and oral reading habits; (5) the individualized reading group was superior in work-study habits; (6) an

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[109]Florence Boyd Sperry, "The Relationship Between Patterns of Reading Achievement in the Primary Grades," University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1961. Dissertation Abstracts XXII (July, 1961), p. 129.

individualized reading program was valuable for developing positive reading attitudes and high interest among pupils, including those making slow progress. A modified basal reading program was weak in this respect; (7) basal readers are not essential for developing sight vocabularies among first grade pupils; and (8) materials at many difficulty levels should be utilized in reading programs in order to meet the wide range of ability among first grade children.[110]

Summary

During the past decade individualized reading has become widely publicized. However, the literature revealed that individualized instruction is not new. When reading instruction was first provided for children, it was taught on the individualized basis. The advent of the graded elementary school led to mass instruction and group approaches. In the 1920's intelligence testing was advanced and its results pointed out individual differences in ability. Once again the pendulum began to swing and individualized reading made a reappearance in the 1920's. Several studies of individualized reading were reported in the years following.

Much of the literature surveyed described classroom procedures and methods to follow in an individualized

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[110]Phylliss Stevens Adams, "An Investigation of an Individualized Reading Program and a Modified Basal Reading Program in First Grade," University of Denver, 1962. Dissertation Abstracts, XXIII (September, 1962), p. 945.

reading program. Studies at the primary grade level of in-
dividualized reading programs have been limited in number.
The studies that have been done are conflicting in their
findings. Some of the recent researchers have concluded
that individualized reading programs are superior to basal
reading programs; other studies have yielded evidence to the
contrary.

Most studies indicated that there were no significant
differences between groups of children who were taught by
individualized reading or those who were taught by basic
reading. The one element that most of the researchers were
in agreement with was that individualized reading is far
superior in promoting reading interests, attitudes and a
desire to read more books.

In the light of these findings, it is apparent that
there is a great need for further research on individualized
reading programs at the primary level. A major objective of
reading is to cultivate interest in personal reading that
will illuminate, direct, and inspire the future lives of all
readers. In view of this individualized reading should con-
tinue to be used in classrooms.

PROPOSED INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM

Guidelines for Individualized Reading

Administration of the Program

Setting. The place to start individualized reading is in the teacher's mind. A teacher must do only as much as she feels secure in doing. The usual pattern of a ten pupil reading group will be absent. The teacher will be teaching children to read in many books rather than in the same ones over and over again. The teacher will be working with one child. That child will be reading a book that he has chosen and will read this to the teacher during the conference time. The teacher and the student will have a private lesson. When that child finishes, another will come up for his conference. The teacher will be able to work with from six to twelve children a day.

In addition the teacher will be working with a series of small groups. These groups will be of short duration and constantly changing. Once the purpose of the group is accomplished it is disbanded and another one is formed for another purpose.

The second step is deciding when to start the program. In the first grade, children are ready to start when they have gained enough skill in word recognition and word analysis to read independently. First graders will have the usual reading readiness program and during this time the teacher can get them ready to work on an individual plan.

There will be no problem as to when second and third grade
can begin.

It will be necessary in the second and third grade to
determine reading level. The reading achievement level can
be checked by means of tests or by having a child read in a
succession of books in a basic reader series. The teacher
must know her children. Teachers are aware that knowing the
child is basic to any good teaching and is imperative to any
learning. The teacher must take time to determine the child's
comfortable reading level, his strengths and weaknesses and
the skills he needs. This is not done to pinpoint the exact
grade level of reading at which the child must perform at
all times but to ascertain the different levels of books
that must be acquired for the room.

Information can be gathered from available test
records and other school records. Some teachers administer
an informal oral book test to help determine level and skill
needs. Other teachers administer standardized silent read-
ing tests or tests found in a number of children's magazines
and other sources. Notes should be made of these findings
and used as a reference when working with children.

It is most desirable to begin individualized reading
after about the third week of school. During this time the
teacher can prepare herself and the children for an indivi-
dualized approach. Through the use of reading groups during
this period the teacher is better equipped to know her

children and to give them guidance in self-selection and self-pacing.

Equipment. Reading is taught with those materials that children choose to read. There is a free choice of materials. This means that materials of many types, many subjects, and on many levels of difficulty are needed. The range of reading is usually found to be within two grade levels lower and two grade levels higher than the actual grade placement.

1. Books. Basal reading books, supplementary reading books, and trade books are all used in an individualized program. When using basal readers it is advisable to have only a few copies of many different series than many copies from one or two series. Some trade books are a must and the demand is great for certain copies; in that event the classroom should have two or three copies of the book. But in most instances, one copy of the book is sufficient.

Many books are provided during the year; they are constantly being rotated. It is advisable to change the books about every three weeks. Estimates made by teachers carrying out individualized reading programs indicate a wide range of minimums. Some say that a minimum of three different titles per child is needed, therefore, in a class of thirty pupils, at least ninety books are required. Others say that a minimum of seven books per child is needed,

therefore, in a class of thirty pupils, at least 200 books must be available. The minimum number of books will be determined by how often the teacher changes the books.

The books should represent a wide range of difficulty, format, theme and style. Such a wide range and variety is necessary for self-selection to operate at its optimum. At the first grade level, books ranging in difficulty from the easiest picture books on a pre-reading level to books of at least third grade difficulty are provided. Continually throughout the year the range of reading ability within the classroom is assessed and the difficulty of materials adjusted accordingly. In the second and third grade the range of books should be ranging in difficulty from a pre-primer to fourth and fifth grade reading level.

Teachers who are starting an individualized reading program need to tap many sources. Books are available from the following places:

        a. Individual class libraries

        b. School libraries

        c. Local libraries

        d. Curriculum libraries

        e. Order trade books from regular book order

        f. Order one or two copies of supplementary readers that the school does not have

        g. The P.T.A. could have a book fair

        h. Trade some of the classroom books with another teacher for those which the classroom does not have

i. Take the class to the library and see that
    each child has a card

j. Write to the county or state libraries and
    request loans

k. Encourage children to bring books from
    home

l. Hunt through second hand book stores or
    service organizations

m. Thoroughly explore the school's storeroom

n. Ask for book samples which principals and
    administrators frequently receive

o. Join a paperback book club

p. Subscribe to a children's book club

2. Teacher-pupil prepared materials. A type of read-
ing material that is important in the primary grades is the
experience story that has been dictated by the children to
the teacher. These stories, written on the chalkboard by
the teacher and later transferred to charts, may center
around any number of experiences shared by the group. Ex-
perience charts include:

a. Accounts of trips taken by the class

b. Accounts of activities in the classroom

c. Records of experiments

d. Accounts of "Things We Want to Find Out"
    in relation to units of work

e. Records of plans

f. Diaries of things happening each day at
    school

g. News reports

In addition, experience charts may be developed following discussion of such topics as how to be a good worker in the classroom, playground rules to observe, and directions for fire drills. The teacher will find many experiences in the classroom which can be used for this purpose.

A second type of experience record of use in an individualized reading program is the story dictated to the teacher by an individual child. This type of reading material is often produced in connection with a picture drawn by the child. Booklets can be made from the individual stories and placed on a book table where all of the children in the room can select them for reading.

3. <u>Teacher prepared materials</u>. There are times when the teacher prepares a chart story without benefit of class dictation. Such stories are often developed for the purposes of introducing specific sight words in the primary grades or for providing additional repetition of previously introduced sight words. In the second and third grades this can be in the form of announcements of coming events in the classroom and in the school, poetry charts, daily news and written directions.

4. <u>Other reading materials</u>. Magazines in abundance should be found in the classrooms. Examples of magazines are

Humpty Dumpty, Jack and Jill, Wee Wisdom and Highlights for Children.

There are sets of self-testing graded reading materials that can be used. Examples of these types of materials are: SRA Reading Laboratory: Elementary Edition and The Reader's Digest Reading Skill Builders.

Paperbacks should be found in abundance. The Arrow Book Club provides paperback editions of children's books.

Newspapers such as My Weekly Reader and Weekly Surprise are good sources to use. Old editions of newspapers can be cut up and mounted on tagboard and compiled into books.

The Children's Reading Service Audio-Visual Catalog lists the audio-visual materials that can be used in primary grades. Filmstrips which are designed especially for use in reading programs make a valuable contribution.

Reading workbooks are used. It is desirable to have a few copies of many different workbooks. These can be cut up and mounted on tagboard. The pages should be filed according to the reading skill involved. When children need practice on a specific skill they can be referred to the file. It is desirable to use the workbook sheets as non-consumable.

Room arrangement. A place needs to be found for the books where a number of children can come to make their choice without crowding each other. A large table will

serve this purpose. The books should be so arranged that the subject is easily identified.

The teacher will need to find a quiet corner for the conferences. The chairs should be placed side by side due to the fact that children do better when they are beside the teacher rather than in front of her. The conference period needs a certain degree of privacy. The teacher should check the arrangement to see if children can move freely around the room without disturbing the conference.

Independent activity centers should be placed throughout the room where children can work independently when their reading work has been completed. Types of independent activity centers to be used are found in a later section of this study.

Routines. Routines must be established so that the whole reading program runs smoothly. The teacher and the children will need to establish the routines together and the more complex routines need to be carefully supervised by the teacher.

Two routines that must be given special consideration by the teacher in an individualized reading program are: (1) developing a procedure for children to follow when selecting and returning books; and (2) planning for ways to help children with unknown words which they encounter.

Children keep the books they are currently reading in their desks; however, a procedure for returning the books

after they have been read must be worked out with the
children. The procedure followed depends to some extent
upon the procedure for selecting books. One or more of the
following ways can be used:

1. Pupils return all books to the teacher at the
   time of the individual reading conference

2. A few minutes are taken at the end of each
   reading period to return books to the proper
   place

3. Pupils return books to the tables or shelves
   anytime during the reading period

4. One shelf in the room is labeled "returned
   books", monitors are then selected to place
   the books on the appropriate shelf or table

Children will be finding unknown words in their read-
ing. If the teacher is busy in a conference arrangements
need to be made to assist the children. In the primary
grades this most likely will happen. Some procedures for
giving assistance are:

1. For primary children, keep experience charts
   around the room where children may go to
   them for remembered phrases

2. Have dictionaries conveniently placed around
   the room

3. Encourage children to help each other in
   recognizing an unfamiliar word

4. Use random grouping, planning the seating
   arrangement of children in such a way that a
   more able child is seated by a less able
   child

5. Teachers themselves can instruct children
   to come to them quietly and point out the
   difficult word

The teacher and the child must develop these routines that are necessary for smooth classroom management. The teacher must help the child to develop self-management, with respect to these routines. The children must know where the books are kept, how they are organized, what library routines are necessary to keep track of books, what records are to be kept of books read, what is their way of reporting on books, and when and how often these records are to be utilized.

Orientation of children. The teacher may wish to start individualized reading by explaining just how individualized reading is going to be done and why. Or the teacher may wish to begin just by "selling" the books to the children. The teacher may show a number of books to the children and tell them enough of their contents to whet their appetites. The teacher needs to tell them that they can choose a book and that she will be available to help them. She then should explain to them that this will be the way they are going to go about reading. Discussion should follow with the children being permitted to ask questions.

Role-playing can help the understanding of individualized reading and the operation of the conference. Situations should be set up between the teacher and the individual reader. Discuss the role-playing with the children. It is imperative that the children understand what is to be expected of them.

1. Process of self-selection. Children need time
and guidance in order to make adequate choices. The teacher
should spend some time with the children in the beginning
just getting acquainted with the books.

If the previous year's class has participated in an
individualized reading program, invite them to the classroom
and have them explain the program and tell about the books
they have enjoyed. In the beginning, the teacher should not
place as much stress on skills but on books, ideas, reactions,
and getting the books and the children to become alive.

In the beginning it will be discovered that many
children go the extremes of book selection. The bright child
will pick very easy books and some of the slow readers will
choose books too difficult for them. Self-selection will be
poorly executed by some children in the early stages, but
for the slow child this is necessary sometimes to restore
his badly needed self-confidence with which to approach the
act of reading anew. These extreme choices will have good
mental hygiene overtones and will correct themselves.

The children should be encouraged to choose a book
they can read and one they like. Finding out if it is a
book one is able to read, means skimming a page or two to
see whether there are too many hard words. The guide of
"three unknown words to a page", barring nouns can be used
by the children to determine if the book is too difficult.

Preventing damage to interest is the key to the whole
matter. The sequence of motivation begins with self-selection

and self-seeking and that selection ends with its enjoyment and sharing. If individualized reading is to be successful, this sequence must be preserved.

2. <u>Interest inventory</u>. When children read to their teacher in an individualized conference they are at the peak of a sequence of motivation, for they have selected this material because of their personal interest. If the teacher is to guide her children in choosing books wisely, which meet their interests she must know what those interests are. An interest inventory should be given to children during the orientation period and this inventory should be placed in the record book for each child. A sample interest inventory is given on the following page.

<u>Orientation of parents</u>. Parents need to have some idea of whatever is to be tried on their children. Teachers would do well to include parents in the initial planning if individualized reading is new to them. Most parents will eagerly support a new plan if it is to promise greater bene-fits for their children. There can be tangible effects in increased supplies from homes.

The children themselves will become "ambassadors" of good will and public relation people. A child can help a parent accept a program if the child feels that the program is right.

INTEREST INVENTORY

Name:

1. What kind of stories do you like best? Make three choices.

    Adventure

    Airplanes

    Animals

       Farm   Wild   Prehistoric   Pets   Other

    Foreign

    Fairy Tales

    Science

    True

    Can you think of anything else?

2. Do you have a hobby?

    If so, what is it?

    If not, what would you like to be?

3. If your parents have a hobby, tell what it is.

A sample letter is found on the following page inform-
ing the parents of the program. Once a program is on the
way parents should be invited to the classroom to see it in
operation and to see the results.

Teacher orientation. The success of an individualized .
reading program is dependent upon essential conditions relat-
ing to the teacher. Essential features are that:

1. the teacher has a favorable and enthusiastic
   attitude toward an individualized reading
   program

2. the teacher possesses a thorough knowledge
   of the reading process and is well informed
   about the skills and abilities involved in
   reading

3. the teacher knows content and level of diffi-
   culty of books used in the program

It is necessary that the teacher wishes and desires
to teach by the individualized method. She must be secure
in what she is doing if the program is to be a success. A
checklist is provided on page 79 for the teacher.

The teacher needs to understand what individualized
reading really means. Individualized reading is teaching
by insight rather than by prescription. It is an insight
into a child's learning by the teacher, and by the self-
insight on the part of the child. Here is reading not by
compulsion but by choice. Here is reading not for the sake
of getting to the next reader but for purpose and understand-
ing. It is reading which not only helps the child to realize

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

The Jefferson School is trying a new method of reading in-
struction known as individualized reading. We feel that the
method has many advantages. Some of the advantages are
listed below:

1. Each child will have the opportunity to read
    a book in which he is interested. This will
    tend to increase his desire to read.

2. Each child will read in a book which is most
    comfortable to him. It will be a book commen-
    surate with his ability. This will eliminate
    the frustration of too hard a book.

3. Each child will be able to progress at his own
    rate.

4. Each child will receive individual guidance.

If your child does not have a library card, we hope you will
help him obtain one. If he needs your assistance in selec-
tion of a book the following suggestions may be helpful:

1. Encourage your child to choose a book in which
    he is interested.

2. Help him select a book that he can read easily.
    He should not miss more than one word out of
    every ten. It is usually better to select a
    book that is too easy than one that is too hard.

Each child uses the book he has selected during the school
reading period. He and the teacher keep a record of the
books he has read and a list of the skills in which he needs
help. Each child reads individually to the teacher which
enables better individual guidance.

This individualized reading is, of course, only part of the
reading program because reading skills such as word recog-
nition (including phonics), location of information, and
summarizing are taught to groups of children. Textbooks for
this skill-drill type of reading are provided.

We need your cooperation in providing opportunities for each
child to extend his individual interests and deepen his
appreciation through individualized reading.

Sincerely,

Principal   Teacher

CHECK LIST FOR TEACHERS PREPARING TO USE
INDIVIDUALIZED READING IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Is my own mind made up?

2. Do I know the reading level of my pupils?

3. Have I decided who will participate?

4. Do I have enough books?

    a. Are there 3 to 7 books per child?

    b. Are there no more than three of the same title?

    c. Is there a wide enough range of difficulty for
        all needs at all times?

    d. Are there enough subjects to interest everyone?

5. Is my room ready?

    a. Are the books easily available?

    b. Do I have a good place for individual conferences?

    c. Can pupils sit beside me?

    d. Is there a place for small groups to meet?

    e. Can traffic move reasonably freely?

6. Have I planned enough for readers and non-readers to do
    while I work with individuals and groups?

7. Have I established adequate routines?

    a. Do I have a plan for getting and returning books?

    b. Do I have a plan for keeping records?

    c. Have I planned a way to help with unknown words?

    d. Have I planned other routines for my room?

8. Have I consulted with school authorities and parents?[111]

_____

[111]Jeannette Veatch, Individualizing Your Reading Pro-
gram (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959), p. 48.

his potential but which helps him to realize that reading is worthwhile.

Procedures of the Program

How to Begin

There are two ways to begin: the one-group-at-a-time change over or the whole class-at-a-time change over. First grade children will probably respond to changing one-group-at-a-time to greater advantage after each group has completed the preprimers.

If a teacher decides to do it one-group-at-a-time she will begin during the regular reading period of the group. The rest of the class will still continue within their groups as before. Their seatwork will be carried on as usual.

The teacher should first begin by increasing the amount of silent reading and decreasing oral reading. The children should be encouraged to read on ahead at their own pace. At the end of the period, work on skills that the children had difficulty with should be taught. Notes should be taken on each child. Each day's session should be geared to the individual child until the day is reached when each child is on the individual plan. The group is then disbanded and are on an individualized plan. The teacher should continue with the other reading groups in the same manner.

The children's names should be scheduled on the chalkboard in the order that they will be received for conferences. As the rest of the children are reading silently, the

individual that the teacher is working with may read the part of the story he has selected; the "best" part, the "funniest" part or the "saddest" part. The story should be discussed with the child and enjoyed with him.

When the teacher changes the entire class from a three group plan to an individualized plan she must be sure that the whole class has been properly oriented. After the first initiation of self-selection the teacher will probably have another orientation period, for many problems in book selections will arise. Conferencing is now ready to begin. It may be necessary for the teacher and one or two children to walk through the whole procedure again to see what is expected of them. When the teacher is satisfied that everyone understands she is ready to begin her program.

During the first few days of individualized reading the teacher may find it desirable to conduct the conferences on a volunteer basis. The advantages to this approach lie with the shy and hesitant child. These children will have the opportunity to observe and become more comfortable in the program. During this early change over, no independent work should be given. The teacher should have the responsibility of outlining the seatwork and jobs until everything is working smoothly.

After the class has gradually worked into a complete program individual work will be done by the children. The following activities give a general outline of what should take place during the reading period:

1. Pupil-teacher planning

2. Independent reading

3. Related reading activities

4. Work at activity centers

5. Small group instruction on skills

6. Total class group work

7. Sharing of books

8. Evaluation

All of these activities are not included in every reading period every day and neither would every period be conducted the same way. Time schedules will vary according to grade level. Two sample programs are shown below:

1. First grade. In the Jefferson County Schools two hours are scheduled for reading in the first grade. The time is divided into a morning and an afternoon period.

Morning Session:

Teacher-pupil planning
Giving directions for independent work
Small group instruction
Individual pupil-teacher conferences
Teacher-pupil evaluation of independent work

Afternoon Session:

Teacher-pupil planning
Giving directions for independent work
Total class group work; sharing of books
    or composing a chart story
Individual pupil-teacher conferences
Teacher-pupil evaluation of independent work
Group evaluation of the reading period

2. <u>Third grade</u>. In the Jefferson County Schools 90 minutes are scheduled for reading in the third grade. The time is divided into a 60 minute morning session and a 30 minute afternoon session.

Morning Session:

Teacher-pupil planning
Giving directions for independent work
Small group instruction on skills
Individual pupil-teacher conferences
Teacher-pupil evaluation of independent work

Afternoon Session:

Teacher-pupil planning
Total class group work
Group sharing of books
Group evaluation of the reading period

The day's schedule should be so planned that children rotate from one activity to another. The scheduling should be flexible so that no child is actively involved in a pupil-teacher conference, small group instruction, and class sharing all in the same period.

Reading period. Through individualized reading, teachers organize their classes, the reading experiences, and the materials in such a way as to meet the real objectives and values concerned with learning. The teacher's time will be devoted to three major types of experiences; (1) individual conferences; (2) group activities; and, (3) whole class activities. These will be interrelated depending on the purposes and the urgency of the needs. The reading period will be flexible and vary in degrees but the following long range

procedures will probably be utilized:

1. The children will be given an opportunity and time in the regular class reading period to make their own selection of reading materials.

2. The children will be given class time to read their materials independently. After they finish a particular selection, they will keep simple records and will utilize a number of ways to report on their reading.

3. The children will be given time during the reading period to prepare and work on the project which they wish to share and discuss with the teacher.

4. The teacher will make plans to have brief individual conferences with the children as often as she can arrange for them in terms of what the children need or want. This is the time a child can tell about what he is reading and can discuss his activities. Through this conference the teacher will gain a better insight into the child.

Conferences. Through the conference the teacher will gain a picture of the child's knowledge of the book's general content, check the child's understanding of the exact meaning of specific passages or chapters, single out some words in order to check upon the child's independent use of word attack skills, and single out a number of words for discussion, perhaps with the whole class, to develop deeper meaning or for joy of sharing interesting words. During the conference the teacher will help the child with his particular problems. During the conference the teacher may develop a specific skill, plan for developing another skill, or make provisions for practice assignments. During the conference

many specifics are fused: diagnosing, teaching, listening,
sharing, discussing, planning, learning and evaluating.

The importance of the conference is record keeping.
When a child arrives at the conference the teaching of read-
ing begins. There are three aspects that need to be inves-
tigated. The record book should be open and on the teacher's
lap ready to record. The three aspects to be investigated
can lead to productive group work later. They are:

1. The pupil's understanding of and reaction to
   his chosen piece of work. (Comprehension)

2. The pupil's ability to deal with the
   mechanics of reading. (Word recognition and
   word analysis)

3. The pupil's ability to read orally.

These are best explored by (1) the teacher's use of
open-ended questions, and (2) the teacher being interested
and a good listener. Demand should be made for more than a
yes or no answer. Open-ended questions make it difficult
for a child to merely answer yes or no. However, the teacher
should be very careful that she does not make a child feel
that he must guess what is in the teacher's mind in order to
please her. The child should be allowed to form his own
judgments without necessarily reflecting those of others. .

Records. The simplest method of keeping records is
with a loose-leaf notebook. Notebooks seem to work best for
they can lie open and flat on a teacher's lap. Each child
will have several pages of information that he keeps himself
in addition to the teacher's records. On the following pages

and below are samples of records that children can keep indi-
vidually.

1. Children's records. Cumulative book lists can be
kept by each child. The teacher may keep a notebook in a
designated spot and the children can turn to their page and
record the book that they have read.

CUMULATIVE BOOK LIST

Tom Jones

1. The Big Show
2. Splash
3. Come and Play
4. Cowboy Sam at the Rodeo
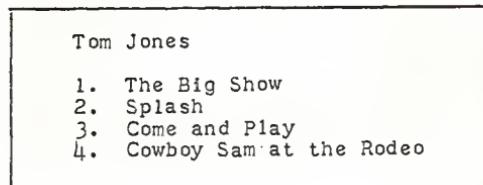
Primary children may enjoy keeping a pictorial list
of the books they have read. Two samples are given below in
which this can be done.

Tom Jones

My Bookcase

Tom Jones

My Book Worm
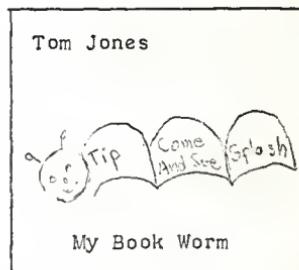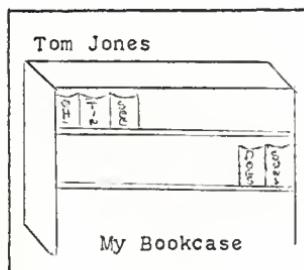
INTEREST INVENTORY

Name: _____   Grade: _____

THE KIND OF BOOK I'VE READ

Name of book	Date com-pleted	Sports	Science	People	Fairy tales, legends	Places	Animals	Facts	Folk lore	Career stories	Poetry

RECORD OF SHARING ACTIVITIES

Name: Tom Jones		
Book and author	Dates	Sharing activity
Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag	11/20	Painted a picture of all the cats and shared it with the class.

RECORD OF OPINION AND BOOKS READ

Name: Tom Jones			
Book title	Author	Dates	Opinion of book
Chow Dog	James Smith	11/29	I didn't like it, the book had too many hard words.

2. Teacher's records. During the conference the teacher will record the weaknesses of the child. The notations will be made in the record book. The teacher will need a record of name, age, reading achievement, test scores, and other information that she deems necessary. As each child comes to the conference a record will be kept of the individual conference with the date. The teacher should keep a record of what ever she considers important; individual or group assignments, books or pages read, difficulties revealed, and reactions. On the following pages are several samples of records. The samples include a running log record, individual reading conference record, oral reading evaluation check list, reading readiness check list, a silent reading evaluation list and a reading progress profile.

a. Running Log Record. During the reading period it is desirable to record comments made by the child, reactions to the story read, reading interests expressed, and behavior exhibited in reading situations. The record book should have a page in it for each child and when the child does or says something which the teacher feels to be important in relation to reading, this information should then be recorded. It is not necessary that comments be recorded daily. A sample of a Running Log Record is given on the following page.

b. Individual Reading Conference Record. A record of the progress of each individual child is recorded during the pupil-teacher conference. The record for the Individual Reading Conference covers a double page spread, on the right

RUNNING LOG RECORD

Tom Jones

10/21   After Bill shared his book with the
class, Tom asked if he could read it.
He knew all the words.

11/2   During the conference, Tom shared My
Weekly Reader with me. He pointed out
all the words he knew.

11/8   Tom asked if he could have the book,
Millions of Cats, and commented: "I
just love stories about animals."

INDIVIDUAL READING CONFERENCE RECORD   Page 1

Name_____   Reading Achievement_____

Age_____

Date	Book level and pages	Comprehension skills		Word attack skills		Oral reading
		Strengths	Weaknesses	Strengths	Weaknesses	

Interests	Special work needed	Group or individual assignment	Sharing	Page 2 Comments

and left sides of the notebook. There is a record for each child. The preceding page includes a sample of an Individual Reading Conference Record.

c. <u>Oral reading records</u>. During the conference the child will do oral reading from both material that he has read silently and new material to read ahead at sight. The child should read for a long enough time to give the teacher a good picture of his oral reading; one to three minutes is usually sufficient. A written record of mispronounciation, nonrecognitions and enuciation should be recorded. The teacher's first problem is to make a list of the major kinds of faults children show in their oral reading. A sample Oral Reading Checklist is given on the following page. There needs to be a check list for each child.

d. <u>Reading Readiness Check List</u>. It is usually easy to form a general over-all picture of a child but it is more difficult to analyze a child's weak and strong points. A form that provides a convenient way to record a child's readiness is found on page 93. By looking down a vertical column the children who are in need of special attention can quickly be selected. By looking across one line, a comprehensive picture of one pupil is obtained.

e. <u>Silent Reading Evaluation List</u>. The most important use of comprehension testing is in connection with daily work in silent reading. This is done by the teacher with oral questions which will disclose whether the selection has

ORAL READING CHECK LIST

Name:_____

Grade:_____

Dates checked:										
Word by word reading										
Pointing with finger										
Limited sight vocabulary										
lack of context clues										
lack of phonetic skills										
Substitutions										
Repetitions										
Omissions										
Reversals										
Speed										
Poor expression										
Poor enunciation										
Comprehension										
Volume										
Phrasing										
Left to right eye movement										
Regressions										
Use of punctuation marks										
Breathing										
Attention span										

READING READINESS CHECK LIST[112]

		Mike	Pat	Bill	Name	
			9/8	9/6	Age	
			9/8	9/4	General mental maturity (M.A.)	Mental ability
			100	98	Brightness (I.Q.)	Mental ability
					Visual perception	Mental ability
					Auditory perception	Mental ability
					Vision	Health
					Hearing	Health
					General health	Health
					Physical maturity	Health
					Lateral dominance	Health
					Cultural level of home	Experience
					Richness of experience	Experience
					Vocabulary	Language
					Use of language	Language
					Clearness of speech	Language
					Family relationships	Social and emotional
					Emotional stability	Social and emotional
					Self-help	Social and emotional
					Group participation	Social and emotional
					Interest in books	
					Over-all rating	
					Comments	

[112]Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, (third edition; New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1960), p. 48.

been understood. A sample of a Silent Reading Evaluation
List for third grade is given on page 95.

f. Reading Progress Profile. In order to be sure all
aspects of oral and silent reading are being evaluated, the
Reading Progress Profile should be completed at least once
each month. This gives at a glance an indication of the
child's present weaknesses as well as showing his progress
throughout the year.

Duration of the conference. Guidance is given as
each child comes to the teacher for a conference. The con-
ferences will run about seven minutes each in length on the
average. Each conference lasts from five to ten minutes per
child. The conference schedule is planned in such a way that
each child meets individually with the teacher at least every
three days and possibly every two days. On the days when
pupils are not scheduled to meet individually with the
teacher, they engage in some type of teacher directed ac-
tivity during the reading period either individually or with
a small group.

Pupil-teacher evaluation of independent work. After
an independent work period, the teacher spends a brief time
informally evaluating the work completed. Children will be
doing independent work that is needed to reinforce a skill
or practice on a new skill. As the teacher walks around the
room she will be in a position to make comments to each pupil.

SILENT READING EVALUATION LIST

Name: Tom Jones	Book and date	Book and date	Book and date
	Angus and the Cat 10/3	Millions of Cats 10/5	
1. Habits			
a. Pointing			
b. Vocalizations			
c. Speed			
d. Short attention span	x		
2. Lack of comprehension			
a. Getting the main idea			
b. Noting details			
1) stated			
2) implied	x	x	
c. Understanding concepts			
d. Making inferences	x	x	
e. Following directions			
3. Lack of word study skills			
a. Using book aids (Index, etc.)		x	
b. Using reference material			
1) locating information			
2) skimming			
3) organizing facts			
c. Using dictionary aids			
d. Using graphic aids			

READING PROGRESS PROFILE

LEVEL ONE - READING READINESS

Name:_____ C.A._____ M.A._____

Grade:_____ Results of Reading Readiness Test_____

	Inadequate	Improved	Adequate
Ideational facility			
Converses easily			
Uses complete sentences			
Speaks distinctly			
Uses correct english			
Solves problems independently			
Experiential reading skills			
Observes carefully on excursions			
Contributes to chart stories			
Reads from left to right			
Makes accurate return sweep			
Reads phrases and separate words			
Visual and auditory skills			
Notes variations in word patterns			
Sees details in word forms			
Hears variations in sounds			
Hears word elements			

Dates of each check: 1___ 2___ 3___ 4___ 5___ 6___ 7___ 8___ 9___

Notes concerning child:

READING PROGRESS PROFILE

LEVEL TWO - BEGINNING READING

Name:_____ C.A._____ M.A._____

Grade:_____ Reading Age_____ Reading Grade_____

	Inadequate		Improved		Adequate	
Oral reading skills						
Accomplished reading purpose						
Phrases correctly						
Uses natural expression						
Uses automatic L-R eye movement						
Makes few reversals						
Makes few regressions						
Vocabulary skills and abilities						
Retains sight vocabulary						
Uses context clues						
Uses visual clues						
Silent reading skills and abilities						
Reads easy books voluntarily						
Makes accurate recall						
Does seat work independently						
Uses few or no lip movements						
Skill in the use of the book						
Handles books with care						
Knows how to find a page						

Date of each check: 1___ 2___ 3___ 4___ 5___ 6___ 7___ 8___ 9___

Notes concerning child:

READING PROGRESS PROFILE

LEVEL THREE - RAPID PROGRESS STAGE

Name:_____ C.A._____ M.A._____

Grade:_____ Reading Age_____ Reading Grade_____

	Inadequate	Improved	Adequate
Oral reading skills			
Reads for meaning			
Uses natural expression			
Recognizes new words independently			
Makes use of punctuation marks			
Silent reading skills			
Uses supplementary books voluntarily			
Discusses content intelligently			
Reads workbook independently			
Increases silent reading speed			
Eliminates vocalization			
Vocabulary skills			
Recognizes consonants by ear and eye			
Recognizes sight words automatically			
Uses common word endings			
Uses configuration clues			
Adds prefixes and suffixes			
Skills in the use of the books			
Handles books carefully			
Makes use of the Table of Contents			

Dates of each check: 1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____ 6____ 7____ 8____ 9____

Notes concerning child:

The work should be discussed so that children realize the work in which they engage without teacher supervision is important. A record can be kept of the child's independent work. A sample of an Independent Work Record is given below.

INDEPENDENT WORK RECORD

Name:		
Date and book	Related independent work	Optional independent work

Skills. Samples of evaluation check lists have been given for the various skills to be taught in reading. The examples are not complete nor are they intended to be used with each classroom. Each teacher should make her own check list which corresponds to the grade level she is teaching. The particular skills introduced and the rate of introduction depend upon the individual child; that is, skills are taught when they are needed and if they are needed. Each teacher must be well-informed about reading skills. These skills are taught individually or in small groups.

The following composite listing represents the skills mentioned most frequently for development at the primary level in seven books devoted to the teaching of reading.[113]

[113]Phyliss Adams, "Guidelines for an Individualized Reading Program at First Grade Level" (Denver University), p. 13-15.. (Mimeographed.)

I. Word Recognition Skills
    A. Recognizing whole words by sight
    B. Using configuration clues (studying the length,
        height, and peculiar characteristics of a word)
    C. Using context clues (examining the known words
        around the unfamiliar word in order to get a hint
        concerning the unknown word)
    D. Using picture clues (scrutinizing the picture for
        clues to the unknown word)
    E. Using phonetic analysis (associating appropriate
        sounds with printed words)
        1. Auditory discrimination
        2. Sounds of initial consonants
        3. Mental substitution of initial consonants
        4. Initial consonants digraphs (th, ch, sh, wh)
        5. Sounds of final consonants
        6. Initial consonant blends
        7. Mental substitution of final consonants
        8. Vowel sounds
    F. Using structural analysis (examining the structure
        of a word to gain a clue to its recognition)
        1. Inflectional endings: s, es, ed, ing
        2. Compound words
        3. Contractions
    G. Using the dictionary
        1. Picture dictionary
        2. Beginning knowledge of alphabetical order

II. Comprehension Skills
    A. According to the reader's purpose
        1. Reading to find the main idea (i.e., selecting
           the best title for a page or for a class-
           composed story)
        2. Reading to select important details (i.e.,
           answering such a question as, "How old was
           Bobby?")
        3. Reading to answer questions (i.e., reading a
           story to find out who went to the circus)
        4. Reading to establish sequence (i.e., telling
           what happened first, next, and last in a story)
        5. Reading to follow directions (i.e., drawing a
           picture from written directions)
        6. Reading to predict outcomes (i.e., telling
           what is likely to happen next in a story)
        7. Reading to gain visual images (i.e., describ-
           ing what is visualized after reading a
           specific passage from a story)
    B. According to the length and nature of the selection
        1. Phrase meaning (i.e., matching phrases with
           words of similar meaning)
        2. Sentence meaning (i.e., drawing a line under
           the one sentence which is illustrated by a
           picture)

3. Paragraph meaning (i.e., telling in one sentence what a paragraph is about)
4. Meaning of longer selections (i.e., telling in several sentences what a total story is about)

III. Study Skills
   A. Selecting and evaluating information (i.e., finding the part of the story that is exciting or humorous)
   B. Organizing what is read (i.e., telling what items belong in specific categories: animals, food, toys, colors and so on)
   C. Following directions (i.e., following directions that are written on the chalkboard)
   D. Locating information (i.e., using the table of contents to locate a story)

IV. Critical Reading Skills
   A. Comparing and contrasting
   B. Drawing conclusions
   C. Evaluating conclusions
   D. Making inferences
   E. Predicting outcomes
   F. Arriving at generalizations
   G. Distinguishing fact from fancy
   H. Making judgements
   I. Determining relevancy of statements

Grouping. The teacher, on the basis of individual conferences, will plan group sessions for the purpose of developing skills or sharing activities. A group may be formed to reinforce gaps in skills, to overcome confusions, to study common difficulties or to anticipate needs in the direct future. These small groups are formed for instructional purposes when: (1) two or more children share a common need in skill development; (2) two or more children have read the same book and wish to discuss the story; and (3) there is a need for planning or sharing of ideas. These small groups are flexible, are of a short term duration and are brought together for a specific purpose. These change

as the needs change. It is desirable to use basic readers
for the purpose of instruction in skills when you have more
than two children in a group.

The teacher may wish to keep a record of small group
instruction; the skills taught, suggestions for future work,
and the composition of the groups. A sample record sheet is
given below.

GROUP WORK RECORD

Group Work				
Date	Content covered	Children assigned	Future work on:	
			Content	Children

Book sharing. The sharing period is a very valuable
part of the reading period. Books which are shared enthu-
siastically by pupils become irresistible to other children;
thus, teachers are not faced with the problem of trying to
locate a book which will interest each child. Many of the
children will have decided which book they want to read next
after hearing about it during the sharing period.

Every effort is made to keep the sharing period in-
teresting and stimulating. This goal can be achieved by
taking time to help children plan different ways of telling
about books.

Children are eager to engage in discussions about their readings with other children. Small groups need to be used for this purpose and there should also be planned whole-class activities and sessions for the purpose of capitalizing on experiences which could and should be shared by all. Many whole-class sessions are devoted to having children either individually or in groups share with the class the ideas gained from their wide readings. A sample program for a whole-class session is found on the following page. Children should be permitted to volunteer for this type of sharing and sign up a week in advance when they feel that they are ready.

Some of the satisfying results of book sharing are:

1. There is noticeable improvement in reading and an increased interest in books.

2. The need for self-expression is satisfied, latent talents and hidden abilities are discovered.

3. Ingenuity and imagination are stimulated, and creative endeavor is challenged.

4. The reading and sharing of books will open doors to a fascinating world which children might otherwise never enter.

The teacher encourages her class to share books and advertise them to one another in interesting ways, thus stimulating them to read more books and giving them an opportunity to show their ingenuity and creative ability in art, writing, dramatic arts, and other fields.

Every effort is made to keep the sharing period interesting and stimulating. This goal can be achieved by taking

PROGRAM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25

The following classmates are sharing their books with us today.

1. Movie

    "Two is a Team" by Lorraine and Jerrold Beim

    Student: Gary Robinson

2. Shadow Play

    "Sleeping Beauty" by Grimm's Fairy Tales

    Students: Janice Smith
              Betty Sabin
              Garland Hutchinson
              Laura Schilling
              Bill Hosier
              John Stark

3. Flannel Board

    "Crazy Quilts" by Paul Brown

    Student: Beth Werner

4. Panel Discussion

    "Loopy" by Hardie Gramathy

    Students: Beth Jardine
              Charles Salo
              Phillip Stanton
              Bruce Schneider

5. Slides

    "Down Huckleberry Hill" by Leonard Weisgate

    Student: Cliff Combra

6. Opaque Projector

    "Why The Bear's Tail is Short" by Golden Book

    Student: Sheila Bratcher

time to help children plan different ways of telling about books. Pages 106 to 109 are suggestions as to how children can share books with each other.

Some children are not as adept as others, but yet have a real feeling for the books they have read and will wish to discuss these with the teacher. Opportunity should be given for a variety of techniques of sharing the book on a teacher-pupil basis. In addition much of this type of work will be done as independent work.

Reading clubs. A teacher may find that a few children share a hobby or an interest, such as collecting rocks, building model airplanes and making poetry books. Such a group can be encouraged to form a club and share common problems and knowledge, find reading materials based on their special interests, exchange information, and give reports to the class. Several clubs may be set up in the class on a voluntary membership basis. These clubs would not have to meet often, once a week or even once every two weeks.

Independent Activity Centers

Much of the teacher's time in individualized reading is taken during the conferences. Children, however, have considerable free time when they have finished their reading activities. If children's free time is to be a learning time, the teacher will need to organize activity centers so the children can work independently or in small groups.

HOW CHILDREN CAN SHARE BOOKS WITH EACH OTHER

1. Constructing a miniature stage setting for one of the scenes in a story is a delightful experience. A box laid on its side is ideal for a stage.

2. Writing a book review for a class, school, or town newspaper not only requires careful reading of the book but gives a real purpose for using language arts.

3. Making a poster is a good experience.

4. Creating a series of original illustrations for a story requires good judgment in selecting incidents to picture.

5. Writing a movie script for a good action story requires good experience that helps the pupils to arrange events in sequence.

6. Children who have read the same story or play may wish to dramatize it.

7. If a travel book has been read, have a pupil give an illustrated lecture, using post cards, photographs, slides, or magazine pictures.

8. Children may make a movie of a book, using familiar mechanical devices.

9. Write or tell the most humorous incident, the most exciting happening, or the part liked best.

10. The child who enjoys new, unusual, interesting words and expressions to his vocabulary may use them in a resume of the story.

11. A pantomine cleverly acted out makes children curious about the story. They will read the book to find out more about it.

12. Giving a synopsis of a story is an excellent way to gain respect and experience in arranging sequence.

13. Using information in a book he has read, a child may make a collection of things or assemble a scrapbook about a subject.

14. A puppet or a marionette show to illustrate a story is sure to interest children.

15. A historical book lends itself to the making of a color-
    ful, pictorial line or map.

16. Broadcast a book review to other classes over the
    school's sound system. Such an activity requires care-
    ful reading, and correct precise speech.

17. Preparing a book review to present to a lower-grade
    class is a good experience in story telling.

18. Have an especially artistic child give a chalk talk
    about his favorite story.

19. Have a child make an original reference book of facts
    from a non-fiction book.

20. Children may write letters to the librarian requesting
    that certain books be purchased.

21. Suggest that children listen to excellent radio reviews
    of children's stories.

22. Writing letters to friends or classmates to recommend
    a book spreads good news about it.

23. Dressing like a book character and describing the role
    played provides an experience in character interpreta-
    tion.

24. Create a colorful class mural on the blackboard, paper
    or cloth.

25. A child's original book jacket will attract other
    children to read the book.

26. Children will like to prepare a monologue from a book.

27. Those who have read "How to Make" books may show step
    by step ways to make an object.

28. Stating real reasons for liking or not liking a book
    takes critical thinking.

29. Have a child give a vivid description of an interesting
    character in the book.

30. Have a child add his own ending to a book or make other
    changes when he is not satisfied.

31. Have a child read some parts orally to the class. These
    passages help improve pupil's imagery.

32. Occasionally have a story told to musical accompaniment.

33. Have children who have read the same book each write a set of questions which he thinks the readers should know.

34. Have several children choose favorite authors. Each may give a brief biography and tell some of the author's books.

35. Cut a large thumbnail out of paper. Place it on the bulletin board with the title, "Thumbnail Sketches" and add drawings and sketches from several books.

36. Stretch a cord across the bulletin board between two sticks. Fasten paper clothes cut from jackets on it and call it "A Line of Good Books."

37. Make models of book characters, animals or buildings, etc. from clay, soap, wood or plaster.

38. Construct a diorama representing a scene from a story on the sand table.

39. Dress dolls made from paper, wire, or rags as book characters. Show them with descriptions of the people they represent.

40. Make a rebus of the children's classics or many good books.

41. Plan a "living book" as a class project. Make a large frame and have a tableau.

42. Have the children decorate the bulletin board with pictures of people laughing and include incidents from funny stories.

43. Compare one book similar to others of the same type.

44. Think up new adventures of incidents to add to the book.

45. Those interested in dramatics would like to write and produce an original play about the magic of books.

46. If possible, have the class see a movie that has been made from a book they have read.

47. Plan an attractive book fair during Book Week.

48. Plan a class visit to a book store or library to acquaint children with the new books there.

49. Children will enjoy making a miniature television set, drawing a book scene on the screen.

50. Books of poetry can be shared in the following ways:

    a. An experience in the joy of sharing, choral reading, is excellent with group participation and spontaneity, and through such recitation, the timid child can be helped.

    b. Writing a composite poem after reading a book of verse gives each child an opportunity to make a contribution.

    c. Collecting pictures to illustrate verses selected from books builds appreciation of poetry and art.

    d. Accompanying poetry with various rhythmic activities is an enjoyable experience.

    e. Setting a verse to music is a delightful aesthetic experience.

    f. A poetry parade in costume gives the children an opportunity to participate in dramatic activities.

    g. Adding original stanzas to a poem given, gives the children an understanding of poetry construction and encourages them to write.

Careful teacher-pupil planning is needed concerning rules and procedures children are to follow while working at the centers. In this way children are guided toward self-reliance and self-control while working independently.

These activity centers are introduced one at a time with a new one being set up only after the ones already in use are being used profitably by the children. Only an ideal situation would have enough space available for many centers at once. The teacher will find that it is necessary for her to pick and choose among the many possibilities; she will need to change today's scrapbook center into an exhibit center tomorrow and to concentrate on activities that children can do at their seats.

A majority of the activities can be set up in a minute or two when the occasion demands. Others, exercise boards, games, and puzzles must be prepared ahead of time and will give the classroom a more or less permanent store of materials to draw on as needed. Many of the following ideas can be adopted or adapted for classroom use. The teacher is encouraged to find new ideas. A good teacher's imagination usually shapes ideas to her own uses and leaves them better off than they were.

Library Center

Since personal reading is the goal toward which all reading activities point, the library center should be the heart of the classroom. It will never lose its charm if new

things are introduced from time to time, models, pictures or
even a bowl of flowers on the table.

Hobby Center

The hobby center can take the place or supplement the
sharing period. A spot should be designated in the room
where children can put up a display of their hobby.

Listening Center

A corner for records and record player can provide.
many happy hours for children. The record player can be
fitted with earphones for personal listening on the part of
the children.

Picture, Chart and Scrapbook Center

A chart and scrapbook table can be the center for
scores of good learning activities; here will be assembled
piles of old magazines, scrapbooks with blank pages, large
sheets of tagboard, scissors, paste and crayons. Children
can use various kinds of material for their charts and scrap-
books; pictures cut from magazines, their own drawings or
paintings, original stories and poems, photographs, pressed
leaves and flowers, and cut and paste pictures. Every chart
or scrapbook should have a basic plan. Even the pictures
that first graders cut out for foods can be classified.
Foods for breakfast, for dinner, for a picnic, for a birth-
day party and so on, can all be a particular section of the
book.

If a teacher notices that a child needs a change of
activity she may suggest that he look through the magazines
for pictures to cut out and paste on one of the charts. The
cutting and pasting is also organized with a purpose; a
child may have a weakness in a particular beginning consonant
sound, he would then be directed to find pictures that begin
with that consonant sound.

Crafts Center

If possible, the teacher should assemble all the odds
and ends that can be found that children might use for arts
and crafts. A set of shelves near a table would be ideal
for storage. The materials the class would need include:
colored paper, scissors, paste, newsprint, string, wallpaper,
buttons, beads, pipe cleaners, bits of felt and cloth, chalk,
clay, ribbons, toothpicks, yarn, needles and burlap.

Scrap designs can be made by the children. The teacher
should help the child see that the shapes of the scraps
suggest the pictures they might make. The children can make
collages, pictures to feel; these are made by fastening down
on paper or tagboard materials that have different textures,
as well as different shapes and colors. Many of the odds
and ends that will find their way to the crafts center make
excellent collages, such as lace-paper doilies, cotton,
autumn leaves and birch bark. There is no end to the list.

For preparation for making a "feeling picture", the
teacher might assemble materials like those mentioned above

and let the children, with their eyes closed, see if they
can tell what has been put into their hands just by feeling.
After children have tried to identify several different
materials by touch, they will begin to sense that there is
a variety in textures as much as there is in color and shape
and they will begin to find words to express how things feel.
They will, from such experiences of feel, store in their
memories the expressive words used that will have a value
for their creative writing. For in reading and writing we
recreate life from the evidence given to us by our five
senses.

Good Grooming Center

Cleanliness and interest in one's appearance plays
an important part in the school environment of all grades.
In the classroom or elsewhere, a place should be provided
with a mirror, facial tissues, a clothes brush and a cloth
for polishing shoes. This makes a good breaker for primary
children when they need a change of pace.

Game Center

A place should be provided where children may go to
play quiet games and work with puzzles. Children can make
many of their own games and puzzles.

Class and School News

In the primary grades, charts or the bulletin boards
may carry interesting news about the home, school, and

community. This interest may develop into a class newspaper.
The newspaper may include original news stories written by
the children.

Calendar and Weather Chart

Children of all ages are interested in the weather.
A large sheet of paper can be used which has been blocked
off with a space for each day of the month. Children can
check the weather each day and fill in the chart with symbols
to designate rain, sunshine, snow, wind and clouds. A ther-
mometer should be available both in and out of doors.

Flannel Board

The flannel board is another good center for inde-
pendent activities. A piece of outing flannel thumbtacked
to a piece of cardboard makes an adequate board small enough
for a child to work independently but yet large enough to
hold a number of pictures. A small square of sandpaper or
flannel pasted on the back of each picture will make the
pictures adhere.

Painting Center

If the school does not have easels available for a
painting center, the teacher can improvise a very good one
by providing room for three or four painters by putting
cardboard in the chalk trays. A caption might be used above
the easels saying, "come and paint what you are thinking."
The children should be encouraged to use large sheets of

paper and to fill in all the spaces. Sponges could be used
for painting in addition to brushes.

Help Yourself Box

A box of suggestions is a device teachers use to add
an element of fun and surprise to the independent work
periods. In the box are placed cards or slips of paper,
each giving directions for a particular activity. Children
who have finished their work may pull a card and do whatever
it suggests. An example of an activity might be: "Make up
a story about this picture of a sad old hen. Tell about
what makes the hen so sad."

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purposes of this study were: (1) to review the
present practice of reading instruction; (2) to survey cur-
rent findings in the use of individualized reading; (3) to
survey literature of procedures to be used in individualized
reading; and (4) to propose specific guidelines to be used
in an individualized reading program.

Reading in the past has been taught to achieve such
broad goals as equipping individuals to read the Bible,
building loyalty to the United States, providing moral les-
sons, developing interest in literature, and building effec-
tive oral and silent reading skills and habits. Since the

year 1925, reading authorities have agreed on present-day
reading objectives. They have agreed that reading should
foster and develop permanent interests in reading and that
children acquire those habits, skills and attitudes that
enable children to read efficiently and that broaden and en-
rich children's experiences.

Continuous effort in the past has been carried out
by educators to improve instructional patterns. Numerous
experiments have been tried in the last century to improve
instruction. The conclusion reached was that efficient
teaching is not inherent in any single pattern of instruc-
tional organization. Efficient teaching can be achieved
through the use of different types of class organization, an
organization that is designed to meet the needs of each in-
dividual child.

During the colonial period, 1607 to 1776 the most
famous reading book was the New England Primer. The New
England Primer was followed by the American Spelling Book
which held the field until approximately 1820. The first
successful graded series of readers were the McGuffey Readers
which appeared around 1830. From that time to the present
graded basic reading series have been used.

Basal readers are used today in as many as 95 per
cent of the elementary schools. There has been a trend to
move away from the single basic reading series to multiple
basal reading series, supplementary materials and library
materials.

In the 1920's intelligence testing was advanced and
its results pointed out individual differences in ability.
A few educators began to move away from the basic reading
texts and advocated individualized reading. Individualized
reading recognizes, accepts and respects the fact that
children differ and that each child is an individual in his
own right. It attempts to meet individual differences by
dealing with them individually. Reading guidance and teach-
ing are tailored to the child. Each child is taught the
reading skills when he needs them. It also recognizes that
a child's interest is a great motivating and sustaining
factor in learning. Therefore, individualized reading does
not rely on a single or multiple basic reading series.
Materials in a wide array of difficulty and content are used.

The literature revealed that variations existed among
the different individualized reading programs in method and
procedure. Certain prime characteristics occurred regard-
less of the variations in practice that were found. The
characteristics were: (1) self-selection of materials by
pupils; (2) individual conferences between each pupil and
teacher; and (3) groups organized for other than reason of
ability or proficiency in reading.

Studies at the primary level of individualized reading
programs were limited in number. The studies that have been
done are conflicting in their findings. Most studies indi-
cated that there were no significant differences between
groups of children who had been taught by the individualized

method and those who had been taught by the basic reader method. The one element that most of the researchers were in agreement with was that individualized reading is far superior in promoting reading interests, attitudes and a desire to read more books.

Conclusions

In the light of these findings, it is apparent that there is a great need for further research on individualized reading programs in the primary grades. A major objective of reading is to cultivate interest in personal reading that will inspire the future lives of all readers. It appears that individualized reading does accomplish this goal. In view of this, individualized reading should continue to be used and experimented with in the future.

Any conclusions or trends given are necessarily tentative. Additional research will tend to substantiate and/or provide new insights into the discussion of problems in this report. The proposed program for individualized reading should be regarded as tentative and should be revised continually as new research develops new theories.

Recommendations

This study proposed an individualized reading program for the primary grades of an elementary school in Jefferson County, Colorado. The recommendation is made that the program be used in the primary grades on the basis of

volunteer teachers. It is further recommended that in the
first grade, children should not begin individualized read-
ing until they have gained enough skill in word recognition
and word analysis to read independently; in the second and
third grades they may begin when both the teacher and the
class are ready.

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A PROPOSED INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM FOR
THE PRIMARY GRADES OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
IN JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLORADO

by

Doris Elenor Cook Richers

B.S., Kansas State University, 1959

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

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MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1965

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were: (1) to review the present practice of reading instruction; (2) to survey current findings in the use of individualized reading; (3) to survey literature of procedures to be used in individualized reading; and (4) to propose specific guidelines to be used in an individualized reading program.

The first part of the report dealt with a review of literature of reading objectives, the use of basal readers and individualized reading programs. The theory of individualized reading as well as the actual practice was investigated.

Present day reading authorities agree that the broad objectives of reading should: (1) foster and develop permanent interests in reading; (2) develop those skills, habits and attitudes that enable children to read efficiently; and (3) broaden and enrich children's experiences.

The literature revealed that variations existed among the different individualized reading programs in method and procedure. Certain prime characteristics occurred regardless of the variations in practice. The characteristics were: (1) self-selection of materials by pupils; (2) individual conferences between each pupil and teacher; and (3) groups organized for other than reason of ability or proficiency in reading.

Studies at the primary level of individualized reading programs were limited in number. The studies that have been done have been conflicting in their findings; however, most studies indicated that there were no significant differences between groups of children who had been taught by the individualized method and those who had been taught by the basic reader method. The one element that most of the researchers were in agreement with was that individualized reading is far superior in promoting reading interests, attitudes and a desire to read more books.

In the light of these findings, it is apparent that there is a great need for further research on individualized reading programs in the primary grades. A major objective of reading is to cultivate interest in personal reading. It appears that individualized reading does accomplish this goal. In view of this, individualized reading should continue to be used and experimented with in the future.

The second part of the report was devoted to a proposal of an individualized reading program to be used in the primary grades. Guidelines were given in administering the program: setting, equipment, routines, and orientation of children, parents and teachers. Specific suggestions were given for procedures to be used in the program. Various suggestions of how to begin, how to conduct conferences, methods of keeping records, how to group children, and how children could share their reading experiences were stated.

The recommendation was made that the program be used in the primary grades on the basis of volunteer teachers. It was further recommended that in the first grade, children should not begin individualized reading until they have gained enough skill in word recognition and word analysis to read independently; in the second and third grades they may begin when both the teacher and the class are ready.